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ABSTRACT

This 11th publication of Annual Meeting papers presents 68 written materials related to invited speakers' oral presentations. The materials address issues of self-study and institutional improvement by institutions of higher education. Chapter 1, "From Self-Study to Site Visit: Case Studies," shares the experiences of a community college and a state university. Chapter 2, "The Role and Responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator," offers accounts by self-study coordinators on their experiences. Chapter 3, "Self-Study and Evaluation: Practical Advice," provides concrete suggestions on creating an effective resource room and using steering committees and technology in the self-study process. Chapter 4, "Coordinating Special Types of Visits," reports the experiences of institutions moving from candidacy to accreditation and undergoing focused visits. The next five chapters address various criteria of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Chapter 5 includes observations on the challenges of mergers, acquisitions, and other forms of restructuring higher education. Chapter 6 presents papers which offer new perspectives on general education. The papers of Chapter 7 consider challenges in assessing academic achievement. Chapter 8 has papers demonstrating the value of self-study as a tool for institutional planning and improvement. Chapter 9 reports the productive experiences of institutions addressing the criterion of institutional integrity. Chapters 10 and 11 describe creative institutional relationships developed among each other and with other organizations. Chapter 12 reports on institutional experiences in implementing technology and distance education. (DB)

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1995

A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement

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A COLLECTION OF PAPERS ON SELF-STUDY AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1995

Prepared for the program of the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
at the 100th Annual Meeting of the
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

March 25-28, 1995
in Chicago, Illinois

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

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1995

The papers included in this collection offer the viewpoints of their authors. The Commission highly recommends them for study and for the advice they contain, but none represent official Commission directions, rules, or policies.

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Foreword

The Commission has again invited speakers for the Annual Meeting of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education to provide written materials related to their oral presentations. These papers are presented in *A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement, 1995.*

This eleventh publication of our Annual Meeting papers comes during the Centennial year of the North Central Association. This extraordinary collection of information comes from members of the Commission's institutions who share their experiences, offering practical advice and philosophical insights as well as scholarly research in papers of the highest quality. The contributors are from a broad spectrum of institutions of many types and degree levels and institutions at varied stages in their development. The writers show impressive understanding of critical issues facing their campuses, and they are generous in sharing what they have learned. The comments and views of the authors represent a wide range of opinions guaranteed to be stimulating and helpful to those engaged in institutional self-study and evaluation and those with general concerns about institutional improvement.

Chapter I, From Self-Study to Site Visit: Case Studies, shares the experiences of a variety of institutions. Chapter II, The Role and Responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator, offers a significant number of papers with lively accounts from Self-Study Coordinators on their experiences. Chapter III, Self-Study and Evaluation: Practical Advice, is just that, with concrete suggestions on creating an effective resource room and using technology in the self-study process. Chapter IV, Coordinating Special Types of Visits, reports the experiences of institutions moving from candidacy to accreditation and undergoing focused visits.

Chapter V focuses on Criterion One and includes observations on the challenges of mergers, acquisitions, and other forms of restructuring higher education. Chapter VI, Focus on Criterion Three: General Education, includes an extraordinary series of papers that examine general education with fresh eyes and offer new perspectives. Chapter VII, Focus on Criterion Three: Assessment of Academic Achievement, features a strong assortment of papers tackling the challenges of assessment and offering information of value to all institutions. Chapter VIII, Focus on Criterion Four, has papers demonstrating the value of self-study as a significant tool for institutional planning and improvement. Chapter IX, Focus on Criterion Five, reports the productive experiences of institutions addressing for the first time the Commission's new criterion, "The college demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships." These papers should be especially helpful for institutions as they contemplate meaningful ways to demonstrate institutional integrity.

The papers in Chapters X, Partnerships with Other Educational Institutions, and Chapter XI, Partnerships with Other Organizations, describe creative relationships developed by institutions with each other and with other organizations—correctional facilities, school districts, businesses, government agenies, labor unions, homeless shelters, addiction training centers, and hospitals. Chapter XII, Using New Technologies, reports institutional experiences in implementing technology and distance education.

This 1995 *Collection of Papers* demonstrates again why the Collection has become an invaluable resource to all who are engaged in institutional evaluation. What is most satisfying about these contributions is that they come from the Commission's membership and are based on direct experience in self-study and institutional improvement. These papers reinforce the characterization of the Commission as an "uncommon alliance" in which the representatives of our member institutions are significant teachers of the evaluation/accreditation process.

Because we have learned that previous collections have been useful to those not attending the Annual Meeting as a significant supplement to Commission's official publications on self-study and evaluation, the Commission will make this volume available by mail so long as the supply lasts. We invite those of you who use this collection as a part of your self-study and institutional improvement efforts to send us your comments about its value to you, and we welcome your suggestions for future topics for the publication and the Annual Meeting program.

Patricia A. Thrash
Executive Director
NCA Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

March 1, 1995

Editor's Note. A number of papers refer to documents that are no longer available. *A Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation* and *A Manual for the Evaluation Visit* are no longer in print. Information formerly contained in these documents is now provided in a single document, the *Handbook of Accreditation, 1994-96*. The brochure, *Accreditation of Postsecondary Institutions: An Overview*, is currently under revision. Publication is expected in May 1995.

— *Susan Van Kollenburg*

Chapter I

From Self-Study to Site Visit: Case Studies

The Self-Study Process: Just Another Project or Catalyst for Institutional Renewal?

Terry Lovell
Barbara Wing

As part of the accreditation review, the self-study process affords each institution the opportunity for unique assessment. While many institutions follow a standard research model for the self-study process, Yavapai College in Prescott, Arizona, embarked on a self-study process focused on institutional renewal. Yavapai College engaged in this self-analysis in order to rejuvenate the organization as opposed to simply evaluating and describing what had happened at the institution since the last North Central Association evaluation visit. The process emphasized building for the future and the renewal of the organization through understanding existing institutional strengths and weaknesses.

The Yavapai County Community College District was established in 1966 to serve the educational needs of Yavapai County. Named for the Yavapai Indians ("Yavapai" means "The People of the Sun"), Yavapai County is indisputably a land of extremes. Covering 8,123 square miles, Yavapai County is a unique rural and geographic area larger that the state of Massachusetts. With a population of 107,714 (a population density of 13 people per square mile), Yavapai County is an extraordinary blend of the Old West and the contemporary. Small businesses, light industries, service trades, ranching, mining, and tourism all contribute to the economy of Yavapai County. The Yavapai College mosaic consists of a residential campus at Prescott, a campus in the Verde Valley, an educational center in Chino Valley, and extensive extension and telecommunication course delivery throughout the county.

As Yavapai College considered the self-study process, several fundamental concepts surfaced as critical to the journey on which the College was about to embark. First, the self-study was to be a collaborative and participative process that would encourage broad-based participation by all College employees (faculty, staff, and administrators), students, and community members. Second, it was critical that the process be authentic and analyze institutional strengths/weaknesses as opposed to creating a document primarily to satisfy an evaluation team. Finally, it was imperative that the process would rejuvenate the institution and renew passion for learning excellence and institutional effectiveness.

Four significant factors influenced the process established for the institutional self-study at Yavapai College:

- During the later 1980s and early 1990s, the College experienced a particularly difficult period in its institutional history. At the center of this institutional turmoil were a president whose leadership style was confrontational and exclusionary and a planning process that was widely perceived as manipulative and too complex. This period culminated in an overwhelming faculty vote of no confidence in the president, subsequent resignation of the president at the end of the 1992 academic year, and a significant change in the membership of the District Governing Board. An interim president, the retiring dean of the Verde Valley campus, was appointed for the 1992-93 academic year. During this time, a search was conducted for a new president.
- The College community lacked a shared vision for the future of Yavapai College. While the previous College administration had a vision for Yavapai College, it was not effectively communicated or understood by internal and external constituents. The College mission statement did not articulate a

distinct purpose and organizational philosophy that would distinguish Yavapai College from other educational institutions. Clearly, the College needed to establish a shared vision for the future, restore credibility to its mission, and institute a planning process consonant with the institution's vision, mission, and purposes.

- The 1993-94 academic year brought the inauguration of a new president. Espousing a collaborative and continuous-improvement style of leadership, the president joined an institution in need of restored trust, mutual respect for the work of all employees, and a renewed passion for meeting the educational needs of all citizens in Yavapai County.

- Yavapai County is experiencing population growth reminiscent of a gold rush (projected to be a 36.4% increase between 1990 and 2000). This phenomenal growth has accentuated the need for Yavapai College to assess its role as a leader in educational, economic, and cultural development within Yavapai County. In addition, it is essential that the College consider the changing needs and expectations of its constituents in order to meet the educational challenges of the 21st century.

The combination of these factors called for a meaningful self-study process broadly inclusionary of employees, students, and community. The central goals included establishing an environment in which institutional strengths and areas for improvement could be identified and addressed, building a foundation for future institutional effectiveness, and initiating a process for continuous improvement to be used long after the official report was written and the evaluation team had returned home. Thus, Yavapai College embarked on an institutional self-study with four working committees (see Figure 1) serving as the pillars of the process.

The work of the committees was augmented by staff-development activities, specialized analysis from outside consultants, internal data provided by all College units, and external information gathered through community forums. Through this thoughtful and unique process, Yavapai College addressed the five Criteria for Accreditation established by the North Central Association and has positioned itself to meet the changing educational needs of Yavapai County.

The four committees and the purpose for each were as follows (see Figure 2):

- **Mission and Vision.** Establish a shared vision and mission for the entire district and identify purposes consistent with the vision and mission. Through broad-based internal and external participation, consider what Yavapai College should be doing to meet the future educational needs of Yavapai County.

- **Student Academic Achievement and Institutional Effectiveness.** Develop institutional philosophy, objectives, and statements of purpose for outcome assessment at Yavapai College. Design an implementation plan and initiate pilot projects to assess learning outcomes and institutional effectiveness. Assess how the institution is currently accomplishing its educational purposes as well as how it can strengthen its educational and teaching effectiveness.

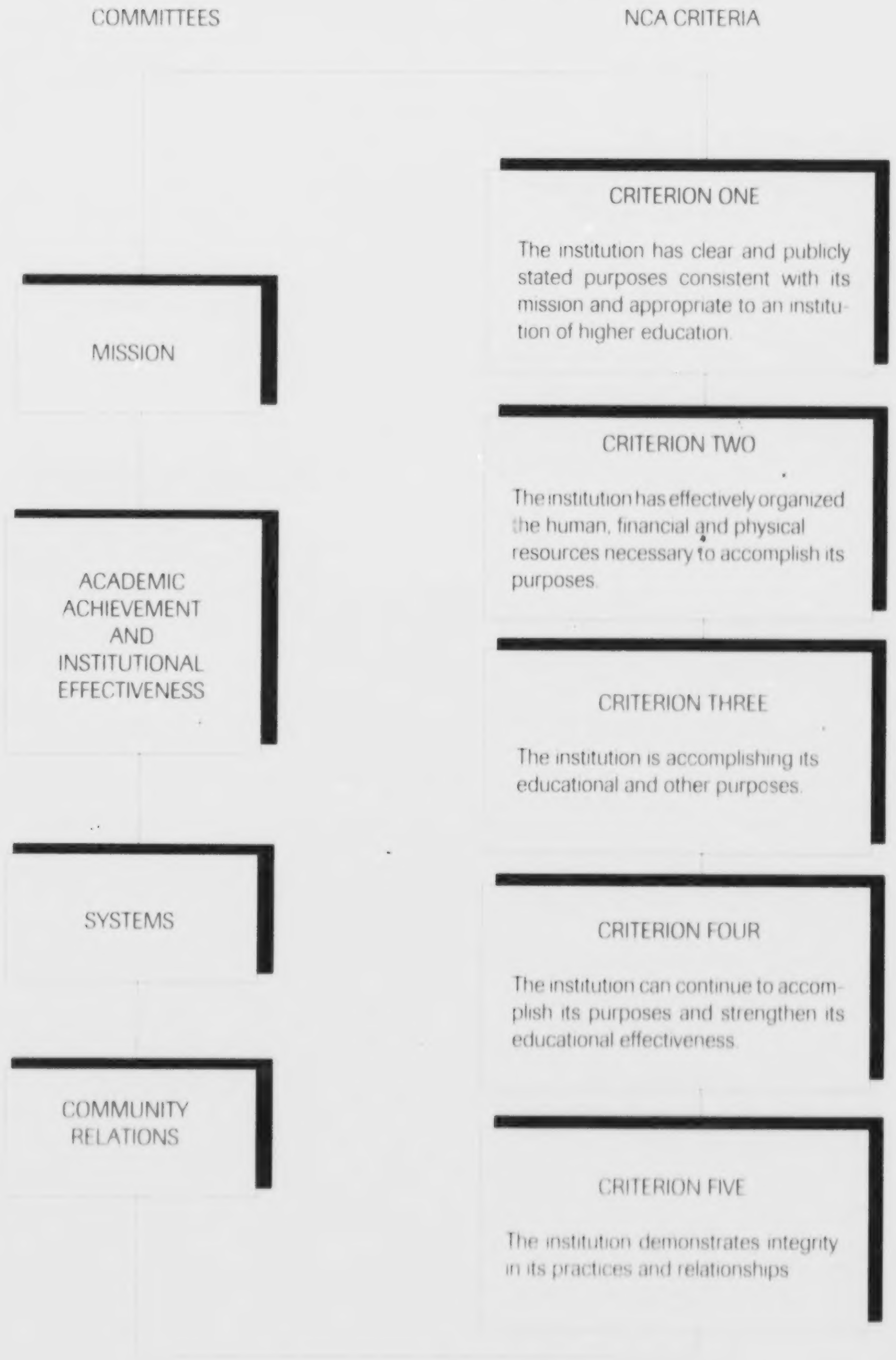
- **Systems.** Analyze existing College systems, including the way human, financial, and physical resources are used. Review the internal governance structure and the internal/external communication effectiveness. Make recommendations for revising, maintaining, or deleting existing systems.

- **Community.** Assess how well the College meets the needs of constituents throughout Yavapai County. Identify services that should be expanded, special needs that still need to be met, and services unique to specific areas in the district. Evaluate how the institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

The institutional momentum gathered during the NCA self-study process was profound and inspiring. As originally envisioned, this self-study sparked the renaissance and institutional renewal of Yavapai College. As an impetus for College-wide examination, the self-study has served as the vehicle for substantial organizational change. The development of a new institutional mission, purposes, and shared vision is the foundation for all future College action. Without clear and accurate operational measures of the educational purposes of the mission and vision statement, the College's efforts would merely become noble words on the dusty pages of another forgotten report.

Figure 2

Yavapai College
NCA Self-Study Process


COMMITTEES
NCA CRITERIA
MISSION
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
SYSTEMS
COMMUNITY RELATIONS
CRITERION ONE
CRITERION TWO
CRITERION THREE
CRITERION FOUR
CRITERION FIVE

CRITERION ONE

The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

CRITERION TWO

The institution has effectively organized the human, financial and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

CRITERION THREE

The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes.

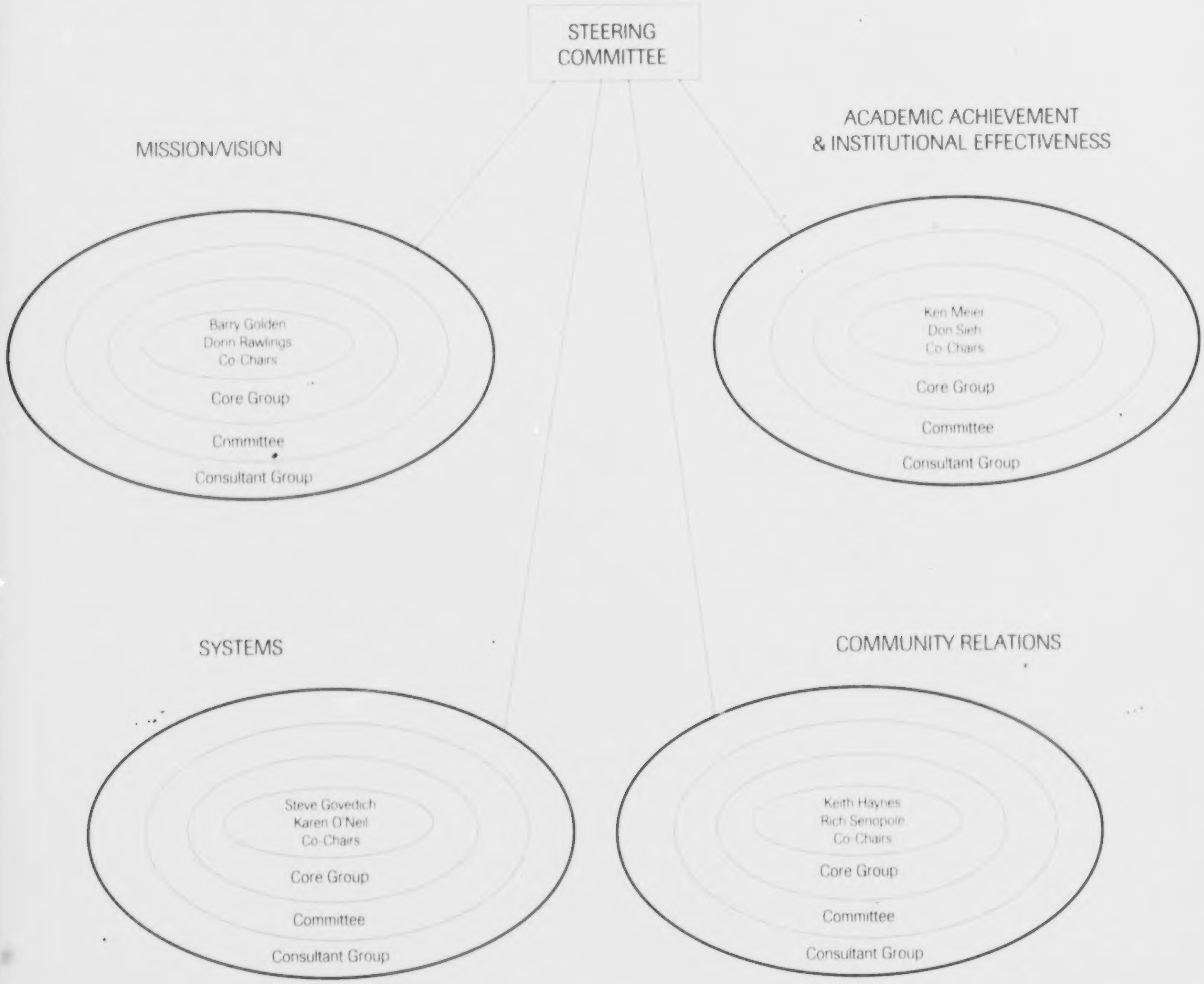
CRITERION FOUR

The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

CRITERION FIVE

The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

Yavapai College
NCA Self-Study Committee Structure


STEERING COMMITTEE
MISSION/VISION
Barry Golden
Donn Rawlings
Co-Chairs
Core Group
Committee
Consultant Group
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT & INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Ken Meier
Don Sieh
Co-Chairs
Core Group
Committee
Consultant Group
SYSTEMS
Steve Govedich
Karen O'Neil
Co-Chairs
Core Group
Committee
Consultant Group
COMMUNITY RELATIONS
Keith Haynes
Rich Senopole
Co-Chairs
Core Group
Committee
Consultant Group

The College's dual commitment to the quality educational "product" and the process that not only produces but continually improves it, is embodied in six key institutional initiatives identified as a result of the NCA self-analysis. Consistent with the College's philosophy on the attainment of quality, the emphasis is on the design of the processes, not the inspection of past performance (i.e., quality is designed in, not inspected out). These initiatives will provide the first set of challenges for the College's immediate future and act as tactical indicators of the successful implementation of the planning process and continuing fulfillment of the five NCA Criteria. The six initiatives are:

- execute a new shared governance structure
- implement the Assessment of Student Academic Achievement and Institutional Effectiveness Plan
- establish a clear institutional commitment to, and visionary leadership for, the professional/technical programs
- advance a comprehensive plan for faculty and staff professional development
- enhance and effectively use technology as the delivery system for extending the learning community
- enhance economic development and champion community partnerships

Conclusion

The Yavapai College self-study process, while used to demonstrate that the College earned continuing accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, more importantly was designed to meet the needs of the internal and external constituents of the College. While colleagues from other institutions had cautioned that a maverick approach could be risky in terms of accreditation outcome, the College community embraced the process because it was right for Yavapai College. The process has established a framework for institutional planning, inclusionary processes, and institutional renewal designed to inspire development of a vibrant learning community. A more traditional approach may have produced the same recommendation for continuing accreditation status, but it could not have inspired the same level of creativity, passion, honesty, and zeal with which the Yavapai College community participated in its tailor-made, authentic assessment.

Terry Lovell is a member of the business faculty and Vice-President of the Faculty Association at Yavapai College, Prescott, AZ.

Barbara Wing is the Director of Curriculum and Faculty Development at Yavapai College, Prescott, AZ.

Accreditation from Self-Study to Site Visit: Anatomy of a Successful 10-Year Re-Accreditation Process

Thomas A. Kaluzynski
James K. Danglade

The University

Ball State University is a comprehensive publicly assisted institution of higher education located in Muncie, Indiana. The university has 1,300 faculty and professional staff members and an enrollment of 20,000 students. Ball State offers 135 undergraduate, 84 masters, and 18 doctoral programs.

Creating the Self-Study

The process of preparing for a 1994 accreditation visit at Ball State University actually began in 1990 with the presidential appointment of the director and associate director of the self-study. From the very beginning it was understood and accepted that the entire undertaking would be open and forth-right. This "warts and all" philosophy served the institution well in the eyes of the consultant-evaluators. In the words of the evaluation team's, "Report of a Visit:"

> The self-study developed by the university serves as a model for internal self-assessment, leading as it does to a candid balanced presentation of the university's current status as an institution of higher education. Combined with the development of an acceptable assessment plan, the openness of the self-study process and willingness of the institution to engage in self-assessment lend strong support to the university's ability to address the future, to continue to accomplish it's purposes, and to maintain its viability.

It was also deemed critical to involve as many people as possible in the creation of the self-study. Nearly 350 members of the university community, including faculty, professional and support staff, and students, were asked by the president to serve on either the Steering Committee or one of Fourteen Task Forces. Each Task Force was assigned at least one Steering Committee member as liaison. The inclusion of this large number of people often made the process taxing, but it was necessary for the broadest input and internal acceptability.

A Directors Group was formed consisting of the director and associate director, an NCA information coordinator, an NCA executive assistant, and the secretary to the director. In addition, the Dean Emeritus of Undergraduate Programs, who had been a long-time North Central consultant-evaluator and who had directed the previous self-study, was asked to meet with the group as a consultant.

The purpose of this body was to search out all the materials and information needed for the self-study, create a time line, and to formulate a basic structure for the entire process. By the time the Steering Committee and the Task Forces were formed, they already had at hand the information and sense of direction they needed to begin work immediately. In addition, extra weeks, even months were built into the time line to accommodate unseen problems.

The year 1992-93 served as the primary period for institutional data collection. From the spring of 1992 through the end of the year, the Steering Committee received various reports from the Task Forces recommending both procedural and substantive adjustments to the self-study process. During this same period status reports were presented to the Council of Deans, the University Planning Council, Senior Staff, and the University Board of Trustees.

Throughout the self-study process considerable effort was made to solicit reactions from all members of the academic community. In October 1992, the director of the self-study wrote a letter to all faculty, professional personnel, and staff personnel as well as to student government leaders urging them to provide input and commentary to any or all of the Task Force chairs, whose names and campus addresses were provided. Two open forums were held inviting anyone in the university to meet with the director and associate director of the self-study. The times, dates, and places of these forums were announced in the daily student newspaper distributed throughout the campus and in the publication *Campus Update*.

These meetings allowed opportunities to raise questions and to make suggestions. In early February 1993, the first rough draft of the Self-Study Report was placed in the office of each of the six college deans and in the library on reserve for one week so that faculty and others within the university could review the material. An announcement of this opportunity was made in the daily student newspaper and the *Campus Update*. Forms were provided for commentary with instructions to mail comments to the office of the director of the self-study.

Throughout the many months of the preparation of the study, the director or the associate director, or both, attended all of the Steering Committee and Task Force meetings to ensure as much as possible focus of purpose, consistency in format, and timeliness of work completion. As might be expected, the drafts written by the various groups were often divergent from each other in language. This required a great deal of re-writing. It must be noted, however, that the revisions of the drafts did not alter the content, but were done to provide consistency to the narrative.

The Site Visit

Because Ball State has made a major commitment to the use of technology in teaching and learning, it was decided to produce a video introduction to the university and to the self-study itself. Using animation and graphics, the eleven-minute tape also served to demonstrate the high quality of that technology. A copy of the tape was sent to each evaluation team member along with all of the NCA required materials well in advance of the site visit.

The monumental changes in the use of computer electronics since the last accreditation visit rendered useless the strategies utilized in 1984 for providing equipment for the use of the team members in the resource room. A letter was sent to each visitor requesting information on what type of software each planned to use so that compatible hardware could be provided. Secretarial help was also made available if it was needed.

Through the cooperation of the dean of University Libraries, a large attractive resource room was made available in the main library building that provided ample space for six computer works station, telephone tables and comfortable chairs, and the required NCA materials. The room also contained a variety of non-required, but useful documents such as the curriculum vitae of 950 faculty and professional staff. The room was made secure by adding locks and each of the ten team members was given a key. Blinds were added to the windows to ensure privacy. Since the room was connected to the library dean's office, refreshments were readily available.

Arrangements were made to pick up team members at the Indianapolis airport (fifty miles away) if they were coming by air. Upon arrival at the hotel near the campus all members were given a packet containing preliminary agendas, phone numbers of key university personnel, and campus maps. Cars were provided that were equipped with passes for universal parking access. Team members were given a tour of the campus on the way to a reception and dinner with the president and the institutional leadership including members of the board of trustees.

Although the entire three-day visit progressed very smoothly, there were a few minor problems. One such difficulty arose after the team leader had given the members their individual assignments and they inundated the Director's Group support staff with over fifty requests for appointments over the next two days. More staff for this purpose should have been provided at the onset of the team visit. A few other miscommunication problems between team members and support staff involved changing appointment and meeting times and places, but in general these issues were resolved by an abundance of patience and cooperation.

Conclusions

As evidenced by the result of continued accreditation with the next comprehensive evaluation in ten years and no focused review, the efforts to be forthright and open in the self-study and to include so many people in the process was the correct choice in this case. Although accreditation was the obvious purpose of the exercise, the university benefited in several other ways. All major academic and administrative units now had formal mission statements. A plan for increased diversity, including the recruitment of minority students and faculty was created. And finally, it became demonstrable to the entire university community that much improvement had taken place in the institution since its last review for continued accreditation.

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Chapter II

The Role and Responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator

Checklist for a Successful Evaluation Process

Frank Wright
Carolyn Fitzmorris
Kendall Griggs

Congratulations on being appointed the Self-Study Coordinator at your institution. Based on our recent self-study, we would like to share with you some suggestions for a successful self-study process.

Crafting the Report

Writing the Self-Study Report is not a "one person" task. Many individuals from your institution will and should have input into the process and the final product. The self-study process must begin with the adoption of a calendar and a plan of action (self-study manual). A good plan gives direction to the institution for the completion of the Self-Study Report. Early planning is essential. Develop a positive attitude among the self-study leadership—it will be contagious.

- **Check List Items:**
  - Establish your calendar two years prior to the visit.
  - Write the Self-Study Manual 20 to 24 months prior to the visit.
  - Distribute Self-Study Manual to your NCA staff liaison and all members of your institution.
  - Complete the General Institutional Requirements before writing on the Self-Study Report.
  - Complete your Basic Institutional Data Forms early in the process.
  - Order cover material and bindings well in advance of final printing.
  - Print 25 to 50 extra Self-Study Reports.
  - Buy a large supply of thank-you notes and send them frequently.
  - Communicate frequently with your college community.
  - Do not hesitate to call your NCA staff liaison with questions and concerns.

Sharing the Information and Preparing the Staff and Campus for the Visit

Keeping the employees of your institution informed throughout the self-study process is essential. All full-time employees should be given a copy of the Self-Study Report at least one month prior to the visit. Additional copies should be placed at a central location in every campus building and at each off-campus site so that part-time employees have the opportunity to also review the material. Approximately one week prior to the visit, institution-wide informational meetings should be scheduled to review the report and receive a detailed itinerary of the team's visit.

- **Check List Items:**

  — Communicate frequently with the employees of your institution through a self-study news letter, memo, bulletin, meetings, etc.
  — Keep students informed through articles in the school newspaper and announcements by faculty in the classroom.
  — Report to the Board on a formal basis.
  — Organize three or four "sparkle days" to encourage everyone to clean their office, classroom, laboratories, closets, etc.
  — Schedule at least one institution-wide meeting with all employees prior to the visit.

Assisting the Evaluation Team

Organize a hospitality committee to make the final arrangements for the visit. This committee can organize the resource and conference rooms, make transportation and lodging arrangements, schedule luncheons and meetings, print name tags, purchase gift baskets, write and print handouts, etc. Members of this committee can also serve as ambassadors during the actual visit.

- **Check List Items:**

  — Make motel/hotel reservations six months prior to visit.
  — Confirm reservations one month prior to visit.
  — Inform team members about lodging arrangements two to three weeks before visit.
  — Appoint and organize a Hospitality Committee two months prior to visit.
  — Prepare name tags for the team members, Steering Committee, and hosts in every building on campus
  — Prepare and collect information and items (schedule of meetings, maps, welcome letter, cafeteria schedule and meal tickets, list of any on campus activities, etc.) for team members one month prior to visit.
  — Organize local transportation for team members.
  — Select menus and table decorations for luncheons and organize seating arrangements two weeks before visit.
  — Organize and label items in Resource Room.
  — Organize meeting room for team. (Secretary, computers, printers, phone, refreshment table, office supplies, etc.)
  — Provide fruit, munchies, and refreshments for late night meetings.

Campus Mobilization for Follow-up to the Self-Study

After the team visit, reorganize the Steering Committee as the "NCA Monitoring Committee." This committee will be responsible for: (1) developing a process to address the implementation of the teams' recommendations; (2) monitoring the progress of implementation; (3) keeping a written account of all accomplishments for the Steering Committee that will be organized for the next visit; and (4) assuring that all the recommendations become a part of the institutional goals and objectives.

- **Check List Items:**

  — Hold a campus-wide celebration.
  — Recognize and honor the members of the Steering Committee.

- — Appoint and organize an NCA Monitoring Committee.
- — NCA Monitoring Committee reviews recommendations of evaluation team.
- — NCA Monitoring Committee develops a plan to address the implementation of the team's recommendations.

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The Self-Study and Accreditation Process at a Large State Research University: Suggestions and Pitfalls

Andrew P. Debicki
Jeannette A. Johnson

The task of orchestrating the ten-year accreditation review at a large and complex state university, although time consuming and exhausting, can also be extremely informative and productive. We hope that our recent experience will help others avoid our mistakes and profit from our successes.

The Process and its Timing

Several key steps contributed to our success:

1. **A timely start.** With a target date of October 1994 for the team visit, the University appointed its steering committee in the spring of 1993. Although this seemed excessively early to the coordinator, it proved to be just sufficient, as unexpected delays and, more importantly, unexpected additional steps crept into the process. We submitted the Self-Study Report, just in time, in late August 1994. A simplified timetable:
    - **Summer 1993.** Steering committee plans outline, hosts NCA staff member for a campus visit, appoints Criteria Three and Five writing committees, sets timetable.
    - **Fall 1993.** Drafts for Criterion Three written and edited; staff works on Criteria One, Two, and Four. Criterion Five committee begins work.
    - **Spring 1994.** Drafts collected and collated on computer: almost 500 pages! Major rewrite and boiling down of text by staff member. Further editing, including restoration of some cut material. Criterion Four rewritten completely. Criterion Five inserted, requiring little editing. Table of responses to GIR's completed.
    - **Summer 1995.** Editing and major work by senior staff to add material, coordinate sections, and ensure that the self-study responded to each of the Criteria. Final draft submitted for review by administrators and governance leaders; copies placed on reserve in the university libraries for review by faculty, students, staff, and the general public.
2. **Strong support from senior administrators and ongoing access to them.** Senior members of the administration began discussions of the accreditation process in the fall of 1992 and devoted a half-day retreat to the first meeting of the steering committee. They were instrumental in defining the process, made key staff available as necessary, let the steering committee do its work, and made themselves available to the steering committee and staff throughout the process.
3. **A small, focused steering committee.** Six faculty members were appointed to the steering committee. Five of them had held or were holding administrative as well as faculty appointments; the sixth represented

faculty governance. An undergraduate and a graduate student also served. Senior staff were appointed to work with the committee. All members knew the institution well, and operated efficiently. The committee did not meet very frequently, but provided very useful guidance on feedback on drafts.

4. **The involvement and hard work of key senior staff.** At a large, complex institution such as ours, hardly any faculty or senior administrators have a detailed knowledge of the mass of factual information about it, or its documentary location. We depended on a few senior staff members, including the director and associate director of Institutional Planning and Research, the assistant to the Executive Vice Chancellor, an associate and an assistant vice chancellor for Academic Affairs. They gathered and incorporated crucial data, wrote, rewrote, or edited the sections of the self-study, and made our report project an accurate and full view of our institution.

5. **A strong Office of Institutional Research and Planning.** The University of Kansas has extremely competent and experienced staff in its Office of Institutional Research and Planning. We were able to assign all responsibility for collection, preparation, and analysis of required data to that office. This enabled the steering committee to focus all its attention on the Criteria for Accreditation.

6. **A decision to build on past review activities.** We were fortunate that the University had undergone a thorough review of all instructional and non-instructional programs in 1992. The 1992 Program Review resulted in discontinuance of some programs, relocation of others, reallocation of resources, and establishment of some major goals. We elected to build our self-study on the data and the results of that review and to utilize the expertise of faculty and staff who had been involved in it. Thus, the self-study process was a means of underlining and continuing the goals and results of the review.

7. **A decision to keep the self-study short and readable.** Having seen a variety of reports, we resolved to keep ours to 200-some pages, to boil down presentations and avoid catalogues of achievements, to put basic information such as responses to GIR's, enrollment data, etc., in succinct, consistent tables. This commitment added time to the process, as key sections had to be rewritten and edited many times. But it led to a more readable and focused report. It may have been the only way to produce such a text at an institution such as ours. Freeing one senior administrator to assume responsibility for drafting the whole self-study, as had been done at Kansas twelve years ago, was not feasible, nor did it seem acceptable or possible given the present climate of shared responsibilities and changes in the NCA criteria.

   We had agreed to organize our self-study according to the five NCA criteria. To the five chapters on criteria we added three: an introduction, a summary of responses to the 1984 review, and a chapter on planning. We agreed to include most of the factual information about the university's academic and research components in the chapter on Criterion Three. To this end, we appointed a large writing committee for Criterion Three, representing all the schools of the University as well as a number of other units. This committee produced a mass of text, which was revised, reduced, and edited three times in all.

   The sections on Criteria One, Two, and Four were written by senior staff members and revised after input by steering committee members, staff, and senior administrators. The whole document was carefully edited for cohesion and consistency. We learned that this kind of document, with input from so many persons, requires far more editing than a work crafted by a small group or an individual.

   The section on Criterion Five was planned by a committee, but written by one member, a professional writer who served on the committee, took notes, interviewed key personnel, produced an outline for discussion, and then fleshed this out in several drafts. This may have been the most efficient way of moving from group input to finished text, and, in hindsight, we might have saved some time had we used it for other criteria. We are not convinced, however, that the vast task involved in addressing Criterion Three would have lent itself to such a process.

What We Should Have Done Differently

- Having focused initially on Criteria Three, Four, and Five, we were tempted to think of the others as routine and recitation of basic mission, goals, and facts. Once the text started coming together and our understanding of the criteria matured, we revised some chapters significantly to fit our overall focus.

- We should have used the process followed for Criterion Five (see above) for at least some of the other chapters and should have given more specific instructions on length, format, and content to the members of the Criterion Three writing committee. Had we done so, we might have reduced the time spent on rewriting.
- We should have incorporated very early in our process the insights of staff and faculty members who had served on NCA teams, and who discovered, late in the writing process, ways in which our text did not address effectively major NCA foci and questions.
- We should have convened the steering committee more frequently in order to keep all of its members directly involved in the process.

The Team Visit

We will offer a few recommendations, based on our experience:

- Make very careful plans for an efficient and comfortable visit. The team has to work extremely hard, and needs to be well taken care of. This requires effort: our team had 14 members! Airport pickup should be carefully planned, with no more than two or three members to be picked up by one host (to avoid waits and delays if one plane is late). It is a courtesy, much appreciated, to have senior faculty and staff doing the pickup. Find the best accommodations, close to campus if possible. Plan meals carefully.
- Set up resource rooms, preferably both on campus and at the hotel. If possible, have duplicate materials in both (we ended up moving a set of materials in late afternoon to hotel!). Label everything very carefully (we used "appendix" for information included in document, "exhibit" and "auxiliary exhibit" for materials in resource room). Index exhibit materials in the self-study document.
- Invite the team chair to visit the campus 6 to 8 weeks prior to the team visit. Have her or him inspect all facilities to be used, and spend time working out a draft of the schedule for the visit. (This should be done in a meeting with the steering committee chair and key staff, including the support staff member assigned to the team). Then flesh out the schedule with specific confirmed appointments, sending drafts back and forth to the team chair by fax. The schedule should be largely in place when the team arrives; final decisions are, of course, to be made by the chair.
- Have drivers and cars available to escort team members to and from campus and escorts to guide team members on campus (especially during the first day of the visit). This is especially helpful when the campus is large and the schedule full.
- Be prepared for surprising requests, and meet them gracefully. Select support staff very carefully for skills, experience, knowledge of the University, and positive manner.

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Shaping a Comprehensive Self-Study for Self-Definition

Mary McDonnell Harris

The University of North Dakota (UND) was first accredited by the North Central Association in 1913. In spite of its long history of relationship to NCA and to many specialized accrediting agencies, the campus viewed its 1993 review with some apprehension, not so much because of the evaluation itself, but because of the many changes then underway. The decision of the self-study committee to use the self-study process as a means of defining and clarifying these changes contributed to the Self-Study Report's becoming a best seller!

The self-study process began in November 1990, with appointment of the coordinator, and continued through public hearings of the report draft in April 1993; the visit of the evaluation team in November 1993; and the positive action of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education in March 1994. When the self-study began, the university was nearing the end of the period of stability represented by the 21-year presidency of Thomas J. Clifford. By its end, the university's governance structure had been altered by the creation of a North Dakota University System led by a chancellor; its mission statement had been revised to identify its role as a comprehensive research university within the system; it had searched for and inaugurated a new president; and it had received a new chief academic officer. In addition, the campus was working to assimilate a far reaching strategic plan that acknowledged the necessity to prepare for a declining state-appropriated resource base, to respond constructively to the challenge of demonstration of student learning, and to react appropriately to the system's adoption of Total Quality Improvement as a management paradigm.

Choosing a Theme

At its first meetings, the Self-study Steering Committee searched for a theme to unify conceptualization of the work. The themes we considered included the following.

- Service to North Dakota
- UND's Strategic Plan for the 90's
- Restructuring and Reallocation
- Recruitment, Retention, and Reward
- Student Learning and Growth
- Transitions

Recognizing that several of these proposed themes were overlapping and/or subject to multiple interpretations, we weighed the pros and cons of each one. The consensus was to choose "Transitions."

We anticipated that the choice of this theme would enable the self-study to deal with a variety of transitions that we judged to be underway. Among the transitions we recognized at that time were the following.

- UND's growth as represented by its changing mission
- UND as part of the North Dakota University System
- A new presidency

- Restructuring and reallocation of funds
- Our writing across the curriculum project
- Our pioneering of an interactive video network
- Total Quality Management
- UND's role in the economic development of North Dakota
- UND in the information age
- Development of UND's research capacity
- Greater voice for faculty, staff, and students
- The increasing and multiple resource needs of UND

The Self-Study Steering Committee envisioned that consideration of transitions would be interwoven throughout the Self-Study Report.

Developing the Theme

The self-study process continued by creation of 18 subcommittees, each chaired by a member of the Steering Committee and composed of members of the university community well informed about the area in question. Subjects of the subcommittees included UND's mission; its students, faculty and staff; its functional units including student affairs, academic support, operations, financial affairs, athletics, alumni relations, and others; and some of its ongoing processes such as assessment, curriculum review, and planning. The academic units were not included in the subcommittee structure; instead, each dean was asked to coordinate study of his or her school or college.

The Self-Study Coordinator developed questionnaires to guide the work of the subcommittees and academic units. Questionnaire formats varied slightly according to the subject under study. However, the questions asked of a functional unit suggest the tenor of these instruments as follows.

1. What is the purpose of the unit? How is its purpose changing?
2. Describe the unit with focus on its relationship to the overall mission of UND. We are interested in its history, size, staffing, organization, relationship to other units, and its uniqueness.
3. How does the unit go about its work?
4. What are its current and anticipated goals? How has the unit been influenced by *A Strategic Plan for the 90's*?
5. What are its strengths? What are its areas of concern?
6. How does it go about assessing or evaluating its work?
7. How is the unit changing? What transitions is it experiencing?
8. How will the unit continue to accomplish its purposes?

In spring and summer 1993, the subcommittees and academic units filed their answers to the questions posed or narrative structured to include answers to the questions. Most of the subcommittee reports were edited extensively to achieve a single voice, but the data they contained were interesting both as they pertained to the individual units and to the university. A review of transitions mentioned in subcommittee and academic unit reports led the Self-Study Steering Committee to identify the following university-wide transitions.

1. UND's transition to institutional maturity
2. Transitions in technology
3. Transitions to diversity
4. Transitions in sources of funding
5. Transitions in forms of accountability

These five pervasive transitions were introduced in the first chapter of the Self-Study Report. Aspects of the transitions identified through the questionnaires were discussed in each section of the self-study as appropriate.

The transition themes were raised again in the final chapter, "The Continuing Work of the University," in an attempt to assess UND's progress in effecting each one within the context of transitions at the state and national levels.

Reflection on the Theme

The UND Self-Study Steering Committee's choice of a theme, and of the particular theme of "transitions," was helpful in many ways. First, our selection of a broad theme enabled the self-study to take its own shape. Even comparing our initial impressions of transitions with the five university-wide transitions interwoven through the report suggests the extent to which this exercise did lead to more sophisticated understandings of our situation.

Second, the interweaving through the report of transitional elements mentioned by various units enabled reading of the Self-Study Report from the perspective of one transition or another. Thus, the report can be read from the perspective of technology, or diversity, or accountability. This has proved a useful tool for evaluation by members of the campus community responsible for development of one aspect of our mission or another.

Finally, the unity achieved by the theme of "transitions," along with the complexity resulting from the several types of transition developed throughout the self-study, made it interesting reading. Student government leaders were lent copies of the self-study to read before the evaluation team visit, but afterward, not one would give back his or her copy. The university relations office gave away its last copy the week after the visit. The Self-Study Coordinator has a list of faculty hoping for copies of the self-study if it is reprinted.

The search for institutional identity is an ongoing task, even for a well-established and regularly accredited university. Our 1993 North Central Association self-study served the University of North Dakota well by developing a complex theme that all members of the community recognized as relevant to our individual and collective work and self-definition.

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Surviving the Self-Study with Sanity and a Sense of Humor

Judith Whitis

The formal self-study process at Olivet Nazarene University began with the presidential appointment of a Self-Study Coordinator and steering committee in February 1992, 2 1/2 years before the comprehensive evaluation visit by a six-member team of Commission consultant-evaluators in October 1994. After I was appointed as the Self-Study Coordinator, I began to wonder—Why did the president refer to organization, details, and my recent dissertation? Why were we formalizing the process 2 1/2 years before the visit? Why were some of my colleagues offering not only congratulations, but also condolences? And why was the previous Self-Study Coordinator from 1984 chuckling behind a wily grin?

Today, I know the answers to all those questions, and more. Experience is the best teacher, and as Self-Study Coordinator, I learned a great deal. I share a few ideas here with the hope that something will be helpful to other Self-Study Coordinators who find themselves facing the same challenge I did.

- **Do some homework.** Before the steering committee began its work in earnest, I wanted to acquaint myself with the self-study process as much as I could. Five beneficial activities were (1) reading NCA materials—the *Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation*, the *Handbook of Accreditation*, the *Manual for the Evaluation Visit*, and the *Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement*; (2) reading the university's previous Self-Study Reports and evaluation team reports; (3) reading other recommended and similar institutions' recent Self-Study Reports; (4) seeking advice from the university's previous Self-Study Coordinator and the academic dean who are also NCA consultant-evaluators; and (5) attending the Self-Study Coordinators' workshops at the NCA Annual Meetings.

- **Have adequate help and tools to do the job well.** I depended on the assistance of an efficient secretary who handled numerous mailings, telephone calls, and work orders, and collected, recorded, and returned reports and exhibit materials. I was provided with a computer and laser printer in my office powerful enough to handle the 200-plus page report and accompanying tables, graphs, and charts. Two additional aids in the computer area were the support of computer personnel who answered my questions and solved my computer problems and the standardization of software across the campus enabling me to collect reports and data in compatible formats.

- **Organize the process, set goals and deadlines, and adhere to them with "flexible firmness."** To me, organization is a key. The steering committee was able to develop a self-study plan in the spring of 1992 that described our process completely. It included objectives, procedures, charges to working committees, a time line, materials, and a proposed outline for the report. This plan served as a valuable guide for all persons involved. And as we moved through the process, I discovered that 2 1/2 years was not too long considering all the other responsibilities included in institutional life. The spring semester of 1992 was spent organizing, developing the plan, and raising committees; in the fall of 1992 committees organized themselves, set agendas for their work, and submitted proposed outlines to the steering committee; in the spring of 1993 committees conducted reviews of designated areas in the university, gathered data, and framed their reports; in the fall of 1993 committees submitted their reports to the steering committee that reviewed each report with committee chairs; in the spring of 1994 the complete report was compiled, written, revised, reviewed, and prepared for printing; in the summer of 1994 copies of the final report were printed, reviewed, and printed again; in the early fall of 1994 packets were sent to the evaluation team, exhibits were prepared, and preparations were made for the October visit. During the 2 1/2 years, many smaller goals and deadlines were set at various stages in the process. It was important to remind people of the deadlines and encourage them to submit material on time. But at the same time, it was important to recognize people's diverse working styles as well as the complex demands of university life that sometimes prevented them from meeting deadlines. In those cases, I found that regular, cordial telephone calls or personal reminders offering encouragement and help often got the job done. E-mail or campus mail reminders were not as efficient for this purpose as a personal contact.

- **Involve people in the process.** For us, a major concern and priority was campus ownership of the self-study process. To achieve that goal, we tried to inform and involve as many people as possible being sure to include representatives from the board, administration, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community. The steering committee was composed of twelve members including administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Nine working committees were raised to review and report on certain areas of institutional life; these 8-12-member committees also included administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Committee work required interviews and data gathering that involved many other constituents. The campus community includes many persons with knowledge and skills in diverse areas who provided expertise to the self-study process. People were aware of the self-study and felt as if they were a part of the process. One of the committees—the committee on educational programs—even composed a song, "Oh, NCA," to the tune of "Oh, Tannenbaum" complete with two verses and chorus that we sang with gusto on several occasions at faculty business meetings. In a real sense, the self-study process helped to unite and strengthen bonds among the university's people.

- **Communicate and collaborate.** Regular, systematic communication and collaboration promote cooperation and collegiality. All constituents were kept regularly informed of the process through meetings, chapel service announcements, the university newsletter, the student newspaper, the weekly announcement sheet, and other mailings. I gave the faculty an NCA update at every monthly faculty business meeting; at some meetings the president, the academic dean, or committee chairs would report on certain aspects of the work. One of my priorities was to keep the dean, steering committee members, and committee chairs informed and reminded while encouraging their input on any phase of the process. Personal contacts for information and data were made to many people on campus. E-mail was a timely, convenient method for communicating with faculty and staff. Informal conversation included the self-study. In short, we talked NCA and relied on one another to complete the tasks necessary to achieve our final goal.

- **Set aside blocks of solitary time to write, revise, and edit.** Trying to write sections of the report, compile data, revise and incorporate committee reports into the final document, and edit copy in "fits and starts" of time was frustrating and often unproductive. An hour or even two between classes or meetings just was not enough time to really accomplish a significant amount of writing. During the regular academic day, interruptions, necessary and important, but still interruptions, also added to my inability to sustain continuity in work on the report. I needed to make time to work alone and uninterrupted. I was granted added released time from some classroom assignments enabling me to schedule blocks of time to work. My most productive days were those in which I could clear my calendar, close my door, and work as long as necessary. Time management becomes a real challenge for a Self-Study Coordinator, especially when the final writing, revising, and editing has to be done.

- **Find someone to proofread the entire report.** Regardless of how detailed I was and how much I knew about grammar and usage, I lived with the report so long that I still missed certain errors such as "t" instead of "f" in the word "of," a capital letter that failed to type, incorrect verb tenses, duplicate or extra pages, inconsistency in format of numbers or titles, and statistics or data in the report that did not agree with information on the BIDs. I received help proofreading from the academic dean and members of the steering committee. We caught many errors, but all of us had been so involved in the process and had read so many drafts that we often focused on content and global, more obvious errors. I still needed an uninvolved, completely objective reader to scrutinize the report for the nitty-gritty, detailed errors so easy to overlook.

- **Print a sample run-through of the final report.** In order to print the final report, decisions are made about format and presentation including spacing, font style and size, headers or footers, highlighted sections, paper color and weight, cover design and color, section dividers, graphics, and binders. Sometimes the final product, after it is printed and put together, does not look the way it is envisioned. For instance, we chose a picture for the cover that did not print on the cover paper as clearly as we had hoped. Since we printed some samples first, we were able to change from the picture to the university's seal which printed acceptably. Printing some sample copies first allows for necessary adjustments; otherwise, the cost of reprinting the final report might prohibit any preferred corrections or improvements.

- **Take time to prepare the team/exhibit room well.** I found that collecting and preparing exhibit materials before the visit and providing them for the evaluation team in a convenient, comfortable location made the visit easier and run more smoothly for both the team and me. We provided team members with a printed layout of the room and a comprehensive list of materials along with a work area, a telephone, three computers with a laser printer, and light refreshments. It took time to gather and arrange equipment and information such as minutes of meetings, promotional materials, and statistical data on enrollments and finances, but it was worth the time and effort. Helping to prepare the room and viewing the variety and scope of materials brought together in one place increased the campus community's awareness of how much work had been done and how many people had participated in the process; it also helped promote a sense of pride in accomplishing a significant task. Finally, providing an environment for the team that enhanced and expedited their work was a goal that helped the visit reach a successful conclusion.

- **Relax and enjoy the process and the people!** Appreciate the assignment for the rich opportunity it is. I became more fully acquainted with many people as I expanded my understanding of institutional operations and life. I gained a larger, more global perception of the university that forced me from a narrower, more discipline-specific view. I learned that even in the most challenging of tasks, I could find enjoyment. And I learned that in the whole process of meeting, reviewing, evaluating, discussing, listening, disagreeing, agreeing, deciding, the work gets done.

The committee reports were written; the final Self-Study Report was printed; the exhibits were presented; the visit ended; the institution survived; I lived!

After the visit was over and I had time to reflect about the last 2 1/2 years, I thought of what a meaningful experience the whole process had been for me, about the people I had worked with, and about how much I had learned. I also thought about what I would change and improve if I had to do it again. Then, quickly, I stopped and saw the future more clearly.

It was about 2002, and I was congratulating another novice Self-Study Coordinator as I chuckled behind my own wily grin.

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Living In Time

Dorothy L. S. Martin

One of the most difficult roles of the new Self-Study Coordinator is to create the plan for the process. Determining what tasks must be accomplished in what sequence and in what amount of time can be a daunting task.

Lorain County Community College's plan for the self-study is a model that can assist new coordinators to develop their own timetables. This paper will cover the identification and reasons for each stage in the process. The importance of creating a public and two hidden timetables will also be discussed.

The College Characteristics

Lorain County Community College (LCCC) is a comprehensive public two-year postsecondary institution located in Elyria (approximately 20 miles west of Cleveland), Ohio. The college that began in 1964 with 417 students in rented facilities enrolled nearly 8,000 in credit courses and over 1,500 in non-credit programs in the Fall 1994. With thirteen buildings in full operation, LCCC offers six associate's degrees representing both transfer and career/technical programs. The College's operating budget for fiscal 1993-94 totaled 24.5 million dollars.

A statistical composite reveals that the "typical" student is a 29 year-old white woman, employed and attending college part-time. There is a 50/50 chance she is enrolled in either a direct job entry or liberal arts/transfer program.

The College is situated in a county in which agricultural and manufacturing jobs are being replaced by service and "high technology" occupations. LCCC is perhaps facing its "most difficult decade" ever: Students and employers are demanding new programs and services; resources are decreasing as voters reject tax levies and government at all levels reduces funding. Cost constraints and the search for alternative sources of revenue are critical.

Despite this rather pessimistic picture the NCA's evaluation team made the convincing statement that LCCC will not simply survive in the future; it will thrive. "The College has outstanding leadership and committed, dedicated staff. Few institutions have such tremendous energy at all levels as Lorain County Community College. It holds the promise of being an exemplary institution for the rest of this century and the next," the report stated.

Accreditation History

Following an expression of interest in accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in October 1964, LCCC was grantedaccreditation status in March 1971. The college conducted a comprehensive self-study in 1974 and again in 1984. Both times accreditation was continued. In 1994 after a comprehensive self-study, LCCC was granted continued accreditation with the next evaluation to take place in 2003-2004.

The Self-Study Planning Process

LCCC's 1993-94 self-study process began in Winter 1992 when I was selected as Self-Study Coordinator by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services (VP-AA/SS). The VP-AA/SS and I in consultation with the President of the College selected the members of a self-study steering committee representing the total college community. The committee was charged by the President to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the college and to produce a report detailing the results of the study.

The first definitive step occurred when the Writer/Editor and I attended the NCA Annual Meeting in March 1993. Neither of us knew when the team visit was scheduled but we blissfully assumed we had two full academic years beginning in the fall to get the job done. Our rude awakening occurred when we returned to campus and I found out we only had 18 months. I truly panicked and complained about the unfairness of such an expectation. The VP-AA/SS, my colleague the Writer/Editor and my staunch supporter for over 30 years, my husband—all assured me it could be done. It *had* to be done. After volunteering to be the coordinator I had no choice, so I began the planning of the plan.

Designing the self-study is an awesome task, especially at the beginning when everything is new and unfamiliar. Coordinators are drawn from the ranks of experienced educators. To become an educator (faculty or administrator), coordinators had to complete many, many years of academic study. Succeeding as students, preparing teaching materials, presenting at professional conferences and workshops, and doing committee work, etc. are all skills and knowledge the Self-Study Coordinator can draw upon to tackle "the biggie."

I began with a list of important tasks. They were arranged sequentially and consisted of the following steps:

- Planning and Organizing
- Gathering Information
- Analyzing Information
- Synthesizing Information
- Revising
- Finalizing

As I worked out detailed activities necessary to complete each stage, they became the "phases" identified in Tables 1 through 5 of this paper. I then used NCA's own deadlines and worked backwards to set monthly goals. I also incorporated the College's academic calendar. For example, I avoided scheduling during holiday breaks or exam week. Except for steering committee members, work during the summer was optional and even steering committee meetings were minimal.

Step 1 became Phase 1 in the final plan (see Table 1) and two major tasks were identified. The first was to create the plan for the self-study and send it to NCA. The second was to prepare the study and support committees so that they would be ready to gather data immediately in the fall. Of course, if any committee wanted to plan, organize, and even collect data during the summer, that was encouraged. Note in Table 1 that such activities are formally listed as a not-so-subtle prod. The LCCC plan was distributed to all committees and several began work immediately.

I also recommend that you take back from this NCA Annual Meeting a copy of the brochure *Accreditation of Post secondary Institutions: An Overview* for all administrators, steering committee members, study and support committee chairs, and each member of your Board of Trustees. In addition, I used the *Manual for the Evaluation Visit* to orientate the campus, especially the steering committee members who were each given their own copies.

In Phase 2 (reflecting the second step of my initial task list), study committees were on their own see Table 2. I was available if they needed help; otherwise I let the chairs have the freedom to carry out the details. Feedback to the steering committee was facilitated by the fact that each steering committee member was either a member or chair of a study or support committee.

There was no problem during the months identified in Phases 3 and 4. (Table 3). Everything was accomplished in the time given. A time crunch began in Phase 5. I did not realize early on how much time was needed for everyone concerned to read and revise the draft. I certainly did NOT expect the first draft to be one inch thick albeit double-spaced and printed on one side of the page! The time crunch and the lack of synchrony between the ideal schedule and the reality began in Phase 5 (Table 4).

Self-Study Task List and Work Schedule: Phase 1

Phase 1. Preparation: Planning and Organizing

Activity	**Deadline or Period**
Appoint and charge Steering Committee	April-May 1992 (18-17 months)
Orientation for Steering Committee and work begins on self-study plan	May 1992 (17 months)
Organize study committees and support committees; appoint chairs and have them secure members	May-June 1992 (17-16 months)
Secure advice and consent of Vice President of AA/SS and President to plans	June 1992 (16 months)
Steering Committee submits membership lists to Project Coordinator and read *A Manual for the Accreditation Visit*	June 1992 (16 months)
Study committees plan their work	
Study committees submit work plans to Project Coordinator	
Submit written Self-Study Plan to NCA (Copies to all Steering Committee members and the College Administration and the Board of Trustees)	August 1992 (14 months)

The problem began when two members of the executive review team were unable to get their feedback to the steering committee in the time specified. I immediately adjusted the schedule by extending the time on a month-to-month (sometimes even a week-to-week) basis. The steering committee was informed as each meeting was held. We actually did not get all executive feedback in until the last week in April. As a result Phase 6 (Table 5) did begin in April but late and ran into the middle of May. I had to move the steering committees' review of the third draft until after the campus-wide review. At this later date both revisions suggested by the executive review and the campus as a whole were to be responded to. This occurred after the campus-wide meetings. A copy of the third draft was also sent to our NCA liaison for her review.

Back to adjustments made in Phase 6, "printing and campus wide distribution" occurred from mid to late May. Desperately trying to avoid readings and meetings during the examination week (the second week in June), campus wide meetings with steering committee members were scheduled for the first week in June.

After examination week the Writer/Editor and the steering committee responded to all the feedback with necessary revisions. This was accomplished during the middle of June and the "final" draft was completed June 17-21. The last reviews and suggestions for revisions came from the steering committee and the President of the College. Members of the Board of Trustees were then presented with copies of the document and given one week to react. July 5 was set as the absolute last date for revisions by the Writing/Editing committee. Printing of the final report occurred during July 7 - 11, but it was not until July 16 when the BID forms were completed that reality and the idealized plan were together again.

Self-Study Task List and Work Schedule: Phase 2

Phase 2. Research: Gathering Information

Activity	Deadline or Period
Study committees gather information: updates to Steering Committee	September 1992 (13 months)
Writer/Editor, working with BID staff committee, prepares BID forms	September 1992 (13 months)
Study committees continue: updates to Steering Committee	October 1992 (12 months)
Study committees continue: updates to Steering Committee	November 1992 (11 months)

General Comments

There are four other aspects of time that a coordinator should be aware of. The first is *release time*. There should be NO skimping here. The coordinator needs to be free from all other obligations in order to be available as consultant, guide, teacher, disciplinarian, worker—unfortunately even "executioner!" The coordinator may have to take over another person's job as chair, co-chair, writer, and researcher. It might also be helpful if the Writer/Editor and Project Secretary (both full-time faculty in our case) also be given release time, especially during the last stages of the process.

The second aspect of time is to make a public schedule and distribute it widely. The timetables that appear as Tables in this paper were part of LCCC's official plan for the self-study and appeared with the admonition that:

Self-Study Task List and Work Schedule: Phases 3 and 4

Phase 3. Analysis: Analyzing Information, Drawing Conclusions and Formulating Recommendations

Activity	Deadline or Period
Study committees prepare reports	December 1992 (10 months)
Phase 4. Synthesis: Preparing, Reviewing and Rewriting Study Committee Reports	
Study committees' first reports due to Steering Committee	January 1993 (9 months)

Self-Study Task List and Work Schedule: Phase 5

Phase 5. Consolidation

Activity	Deadline or Period
Steering committee begins construction of report drafts	February 1993 (8 months)
First draft goes to Writer/Editor	February 1993 (8 months)
Writer/Editor prepares first draft	February 1993 (8 months)
Draft printed and distributed to Steering Committee	February 1993 (8 months)
Steering Committee reviews draft and revises	February 1993 (8 months)
Steering Committee and Writer/Editor review draft and revise	March 1993 (7 months)
Executive review and feedback	March 1993 (7 months)
Writer/Editor and Steering Committee incorporate Executive feedback and create third draft	March 1993 (7 months)

> *It is critical to the success of this project that the reporting guidelines and timelines be strictly observed. The study committees, the Steering Committee, and the Writer/Editor are dealing with a huge quantity and a great variety of information. Adherence to the guidelines is the only way we can ensure a quality product, delivered on time.* (Emphasis in the original)

The official schedule is the coordinator's "best-case" scenario and he or she should act as if it is the *only* one.

In addition, dates should be identified in a "worse-case" scenario. These are absolutely the last dates a certain task or tasks must be completed in order to satisfy NCA's timetable. You are talking here about working on the weekends, pulling one or more "all nighters" and overnight delivery. You may be able to avoid the nightmare if you also create a third timetable with dates somewhere between the best and the worst cases. Remember to act as if the official schedule is the only one.

Do not, I repeat, do not let a single person know the last two schedules exist. Lavish praise on those who complete assignments on time. I always listed study/support committee chairs and members in our campus newsletters with expressions of congratulations and appreciation. And woe unto me, if I neglect one name! I was called. I put an explanation for the omission (*mea culpa*) plus an apology in the next issue. Who says campus folks do not read their mail. Neglect one person's name and you will see the truth—quickly. Do not hesitate to reiterate deadlines, express disappointment, concern, even offer to assist the scofflaws (not in public!). Use phone mail or better yet waylay them privately.

Self-Study Task List and Work Schedule: Phase 6

Phase 6. Finalization

Activity	Deadline or Period
Writer/Editor prepares third draft	April 1993 (6 months)
Steering Committee reviews third draft	April 1993 (6 months)
Printing and campus-wide distribution	April 1993 (6 months)
Campus-wide review of Report	April 1993 (6 months)
Campus-wide meetings with Steering Committee members	May 1993 (5 months)
Steering Committee and Writer/Editor incorporate campus-wide feedback and revise documents	May 1993 (5 months)
Final draft to Writer/Editor for completion and review with Vice President AA/SS	May 1993 (5 months)
Final review by Steering Committee and President Church; presentation to Board of Trustees	May 1993 (5 months)
Last date for revisions, if necessary, by Steering Committee; Writer/Editor and Vice President AA/SS final review	June 1993 (4 months)
Priunting of final report	June 1993 (4 months)
Completion of BID Forms by Support Committee, Coordinator and Writer/Editor	July 1993 (3 months)
Self-Study Report sent to Commission	August 1993 (2 months)
Self-Study Report sent to each Evaluation Team member	September 1993 (1 month)
Commission Team Visit	October 1993 (0 months)

Conclusion

Support for the coordinator can come from the many qualified and competent people on campus and in the community. You can delegate many tasks, but no one…no one but the coordinator can be the time manager and task master for a successful self-study.

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Self-Study: Pitfalls and Possibilities

Sister Margaret Wick

The self-study process and subsequent writing of the Self-Study Report is a significant event in the life of a college or university. By definition, it calls for introspection. This introspection can be an opportunity for change that is growthful or it can become an end unto itself, having little positive impact.

The reflections that follow come from my experience of coordinating a self-study at Briar Cliff College, a private college of 1150 students and from ten years of experience as an NCA consultant-evaluator, primarily at small, church-related colleges. The insights presented here may hold true only for these kinds of institutions, but I suspect that some may be transferable to larger, public universities.

I will address six areas of the self-study process that hold the potential to be pitfalls or possibilities:

- Structure of the process
- Involving constituencies
- Using the GIR's and Criteria
- Gathering data vs. evaluating data
- Writing the Self-Study Report
- Servicing the evaluation team

Structure of the Process

There is no perfect way to organize the process. It is important that the self-study process come out of the ongoing dynamic of the institution; it should be an integrated process, not one that runs parallel to the ongoing governance administrative life of the college. We used existing governance groups rather than create a separate self-study group because we were already "over-committed." If you set up a separate group be sure its activities have a link with what else is going on at the college, especially the planning activities. My personal opinion is that if existing structures are used there is a higher probability for ongoing implementation of the recommendations identified by the self-study and the evaluation team.

Involving Constituencies

The self-study process is an opportunity to gather together the perspectives of the varied constituencies of a college: board, administration, faculty, staff, students, alums. This is one of the few times we can legitimately call on all of these constituencies to tell us how they perceive the college. The pitfall here is that we treat the feedback in discrete ways rather than integrating it into a holistic perspective on the college. Involvement is time-consuming and it needs to be carefully planned. We found that having discussions on the criteria with mixed groups of the constituencies gave us the most accurate collective evaluation of the college.

Using the GIR's and Criteria

The expanded GIR's and new criteria can be restrictive or expanding. Use them in a way that helps you. We organized discussions around the criteria and found that the results were surprisingly helpful when we wrote the report. Addressing each GIR in the Self-Study Report was good exercise, even though at the time it seemed rather perfunctory. Some colleges find it helpful to relate the discussion of the GIR's to the criteria rather than discuss the two separately.

Gathering Data vs. Evaluating Data

One of the differences between the old and new criteria is that the latter are much more evaluative than descriptive. Certainly, the self-study process calls for pulling together data from a variety of sources. The questions to be asked continually are: What do these data tell us? What are the implications for the future? How can what we have collected be used in the ongoing decision-making process of the college? Do not drown yourself in data. Do collect relevant data, reflect upon it, and develop recommendations for future actions.

Writing the Report

While the format of the Self-Study Report should be reflective of the self-study process, the writing of the report is an opportunity to shape the outcomes of the process, giving it some order and direction. Rather than a simple "cut and paste" of separate sub-committees, the report can integrate, point out inconsistencies, and highlight strengths and weaknesses. One of the format details we found helpful was to conclude each section with a short list of the obvious strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations that grew out of the chapter. In one sense, we were doing the team's work, but it was helpful for us and for the team.

After our report was written we gave every employee and a group of student leaders a copy and scheduled a series of discussions two months before the visit. These discussions brought together faculty, students, administrators and staff in round table formats. Questions discussed were:

- What was the most interesting/unexpected/surprising piece of information that you found when reading the self-study?
- What, in your opinion, has been the college's most significant accomplishment during the past ten years?
- What, in your opinion, is one thing the college should have done in the past ten years that it did not do?
- Does the Self-Study Report omit significant items? Are there errors or misrepresentation? and
- What would you add to (or subtract from) the concluding chapter?

The results of these discussions were summarized in an addendum to the Self-Study Report that was sent to the team.

Servicing the Evaluation Team

Evaluation team members will be more effective if you prepare them well. A well written Self-Study Report, an accurate set of Basic Institutional Data forms, and an organized set of supportive materials in the resource room are the basic essentials. Communicate early and clearly with your team chair. Be supportive without smothering. Let the team chart its own course, but be there when team members need you to schedule appointments or provide lists of employees and office locations. A well organized resource room is essential, and it helps if your team knows prior to the visit what will be available.

Conclusion

Accreditation is an opportunity, not a burden. If we define it as an opportunity we can ensure that it will help our colleges change rather than be an exercise in fruitless self-reflection. The direction depends on us. Indeed, the future of the entire accreditation process will be shaped by our ability to capitalize on its possibilities and avoid its pitfalls.

Sister Margaret Wick is President of Briar Cliff College, Sioux City, IA.

How to Succeed as the Self-Study Coordinator with Facts, Friends, and Frolic

Donald R. Murray

You are about to launch (or have already launched) a study that will give you more insight into your institution than you may want to know. Your attitude, however, toward the study is the secret to your success as the Self-Study Coordinator. The experience in collecting, organizing, and evaluating facts can be accomplished in a friendly and frolicky manner.

Your administration may need to be convinced that the self-study process and purpose should be more than a report to the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). It should be a benchmark of the college that will be referred to throughout the next ten years. It should be a serviceable experience and reference for the college as a whole as well as for each department within the college. If all the members of the college community (students, staff, faculty, administrators, and trustees) understand this greater purpose, they will be more willing to be a part of the process. In fact, they might even enjoy the experience.

The Steering Committee

No rule of thumb has been established that dictates the size or membership of the steering committee. The size and membership, however, should reflect the administrative environment of the institution. Traditionally at Malone College, the Steering Committee has represented the entire college community. The Steering Committee was selected by the Coordinator in consultation with the Faculty Senate, the Provost, and the President. The Committee consisted of representatives from the student body, alumni, staff, faculty, administration, and trustees.

The five objectives of the Malone College Steering Committee were:

- to review and approve the Self-Study Plan;
- to oversee all stages of the Self-study process;
- to encourage college-wide participation;
- to read and evaluate all departmental reports and abstracts, submit summative recommendations in writing to the department chairs or administrators, meet with such persons to discuss recommendations, and report activities to the Coordinator; and
- to assist in editing all chapters of the NCA Self-Study Report.

Dinner/working meetings with the Steering Committee are a great way to make involvement in the self-study process more palatable—perhaps even appetizing. Dinner meetings give needed flexibility to participants.

The Purpose of the Self-Study Report

The encompassing goal of the self-study should go far beyond the purpose of accreditation or reaccreditation. It should provide the institution with the opportunity to review and to evaluate institutional strengths and weaknesses and to develop and implement strategies for improvement. This makes the time-consuming and costly process infinitely more worthwhile.

There are two main purposes of the Malone College self-study process and Report. The first is to support the underlying theme, "Malone College continues to be a College in purposeful transition and the concern of the founders remains the guiding light—a light that beams brightly throughout change. It is not a new theme—it is the theme that is woven throughout the more than one-hundred year history of the College." The second is to address the General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) and criteria. Both purposes direct the contents and intentions of the Report. The development of these purposes reveals the strengths and weaknesses, which in turn prompts the need to develop strategies for improvement.

The Self-Study Time Schedule

The self-study time schedule should include visits to the NCA Self-Study Workshops (at least two prior to the date of your NCA team visit), the appointment of the steering committee, appropriate time to gather and analyze data, sufficient time for persons to respond to requests for additional data, meetings with the steering committee and other committees, and ample time to write and revise the final document—the Self-Study Report. Above all, be flexible—leave time for delays and keep the community informed as to the progress of the report.

Organization of the Self-Study

No formal organizational plan has been established by NCA for the self-study. The organizational plan, however, should reflect the nature of the self-study and the institution. Organizing Malone College's self-study process around the existing academic and non-academic departments involved the entire institution in the self-study. Consequently, the results of the self-study are useful to the college as a whole as well as to the various departments. Each department was asked to involve its entire staff in a prescribed self-study. This eliminated the need to appoint self-study committees that would disband when the self-study process was completed. This organizational structure has provided the various departments with benchmark documents that will be referred to throughout the next ten years. It also provides a means for individual departments to do periodic (every three or four years) reviews, evaluations, and updates.

To ensure consistency in the self-study process and the input from the various departments, two NCA self-study documents were developed—*Malone College NCA Self-Study for Academic Departments* and *Malone College NCA Self-Study for Non-Academic Departments*. These departmental self-studies included responses to each of the four criteria established by NCA for accreditation. They also required quantitative data, such as number of majors, grade distribution, etc. After the departments completed their self-studies, they were asked to submit abstracts, on computer disk, to the Coordinator. These three to four page abstracts (as edited by the Coordinator) became part of the Self-Study Report.

Gathering Data

Ideally, all the data needed for the NCA Self-Study would be located in one office or on one computer. This was not the case at Malone College. Data were housed in various offices and on various computers. In addition to centralizing the departmental self-study reports in the Coordinators Office, institutional data needed to be collected from various offices and reports. Offices involved were the Records Office, Institutional Advancement Office, and the Assistant to the Provost's Office. Reports that were incorporated were the 1992 Malone College Self-Study Questionnaire and Results, which included responses from students, staff, faculty, and administrators;

Senior Exit Surveys; Entering Student Surveys; 1988 and 1992 Alumni Surveys; Lilly/CCC Development Audit; special accreditation reports; Academic Assessment Program Notebook, etc.

Although data were not located in one office, they were willingly provided upon request of the Coordinator. Early in the self-study process, an ad hoc committee was created, including persons from whom data would be requested, to determine exactly which data would be needed in the self-study. This provided a forum to develop ownership of the self-study process. Along with a positive attitude, campus-wide ownership of the process was a major concern of the Coordinator.

Supporting Material for the NCA Evaluation Team

In addition to the supporting materials mailed to each member of the NCA Evaluation Team, all documents of evidence were made available. From the very beginning of the NCA self-study process, documents used in or resulting from the self-study were collected by the Coordinator. Except for faculty files, personnel records, and student transcripts, all documents were displayed in a room set aside for the team. A list of these documents was prepared and presented to the team members upon their arrival on campus. The decision to collect these documents of evidence, early in the process, greatly decreased anxiety at the conclusion of the formal self-study process.

Personal Note

From a personal note, I approached the NCA self-study process with the attitude that it would contribute to my own professional growth, broaden my understanding of the College, and give me an opportunity to be of significant service to Malone College.

My determination to gather and analyze facts in a friendly and frolicky manner was rewarded by the good-natured cooperation of the entire Malone College community. It can happen! It did happen! Together we celebrated the awaited news, "the NCA Commission voted to continue accreditation of Malone College with the next comprehensive evaluation in ten years."

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Making Sure Your Self-Study Covers All of the Bases

Don Lind

A Mixed Blessing

Being asked to coordinate the development of an institutional self-study for purposes of North Central accreditation is, at the same time, both flattering and frightening. It is indeed one of the highest forms of respect and confidence that an institution can grant to a person. With it comes a serious obligation to oversee a multi-year project involving dozens and possibly hundreds of colleagues working together in ways that may have never been done before. A Self-Study Coordinator must carefully plan both the process and the product for the process must result in a comprehensive document that in turn must be reflective of a common process. While all of this may sound a little awesome, newly appointed Self-Study Coordinators need only remember that many have gone before them in this venture and they need only to tap into the wealth of information and guidance that is available.

Sharing the Vision

The single most critical factor leading to success in the writing of a successful Self-Study Report is *vision*; from this, everything else flows. This vision need not come from a flash of intuition or inspiration but as an outgrowth of careful consideration, planning, and organization. The activities and contributions made by faculty and staff tend to be guided by where they are in the overall organization. On the other hand, their enthusiasm and degree of "ownership" depends on the extent to which the Self-Study Coordinator manages to convey this vision and its value. The ability to arrive at a vision, to nurture it, and spread it to others is an absolute imperative for the one selected to lead the institution on its quest for accreditation by North Central.

A viable vision is supported by the pillars of organization, mobilization, and utilization. The "Plan of Action" submitted to North Central describing the institution's proposed actions, as well as the actual self-study document itself must reflect a high degree of organization from the outset. The faculty, staff, administration, and Board of Trustees must be mobilized early on by means of a clear and well-articulated vision as set forth by the Self-Study Coordinator. Finally, the effective utilization of all resources including consultants, reference materials, and technology must be made. Therefore, it is extremely important that the Self-Study Coordinator familiarize himself/herself with as many available resources as possible as soon as possible.

The Central Theme

The central theme of any well-written institutional self-study is a detailed discussion of whether or not the institution is doing what its mission statement describes and to what extent. This should be the first step for any Self-Study Coordinator to take. The mission as made public by the institution must be appropriate to that type of institution. A public community college is fundamentally different from a university, just as a public university usually has a different agenda as compared to a small church-related college. While it is absolutely imperative that the institution is doing everything its mission states, it is also important that an adequate rationale be given for any activities occurring that are not directly traceable back to the stated mission. While such activities may be well and proper, if they do not stem directly from the publicly stated mission red flags are likely to go up as to importance of these activities and/or the comprehensive nature of the institution's mission statement.

The Five Tests

In discussing the mission statement or any other important topic within a self–study five tests should be applied. These tests are essentially restatements of the five characteristics of "useful" information as cited in any information processing course. They are:

- **Accuracy.** To what degree do the implications being conveyed represent reality?
- **Completeness.** To what extent does the information being stated represent the total picture and not just some fraction thereof.
- **Timeliness.** Are the ideas being presented still true or do they represent a set of circumstances that no longer exist? Are the statements going to be true in the future but are currently pending?
- **Relevance.** Are the ideas being presented supportive of the central point of discussion? Could these statements be eliminated without loss of impact? Might other facts and figures make for a more compelling argument for the point under consideration?
- **Conciseness.** Is the space used and the time required to read a statement justified? Could the ideas expressed be expressed as well with fewer words? Could portions of the narrative be eliminated all together and not affect the extent to which the an idea is advanced?

The Chicken and the Egg

A question that might well arise indefinitely and never be satisfactorily answered involves the issue of the role the Steering Committee plays in the initial stages of the self–study process. Should the Self–Study Coordinator lay out the basic organizational scheme and then form the committees to carry out these ideas or should the committees acting through the Steering Committee assist the Coordinator is mapping out the entire project? Obviously there is no one suitable answer to this question as it involves multitudes of personalities as well as differing styles of problem solving. As was mentioned previously, the need for the Coordinator to present a vision that hopefully inspires the committee members is extremely important to the sustained functioning of these committees. It might be wise for the Coordinator to arrive at a preliminary but detailed plan at the outset, present this to the committees, welcoming—indeed encouraging—additions, deletions, and needed modifications to the plan. The Coordinator must never lose sight of the importance the vision is to those that would work with him/her. A Coordinator who would forego the formulation of a vision in an attempt to enhance the democratization of the process is embarking on a long and arduous journey jeopardizing the very leadership abilities required for a successful outcome.

Addressing the Major Areas

When compiling the first rough draft of the Self–Study Report's contents it is important to include all major areas for consideration. The North Central Association identifies these very clearly in their various booklets and publications. Among the more significant topics that must be addressed by the Self–Study are:

- Illustrating the relationship between the mission statement and the institution's long-range planning.
- Integrating the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan with the institution's General Education program.
- Assessing all major activities taking place within the institution, the role they play, and how they tie back to the mission statement.
- Indexing the self–study to North Central's five Criteria for Accreditation.
- Document the flow of accountability within the institution.

This list when overlaid with the central theme of dependence upon the institution's mission statement provides the Self-Study Coordinator with a virtual blueprint with which to construct a viable self-study outline. While this list may not be explicitly exhaustive, all the major components are included and when fleshed out will readily cast a light on the minor topics that are normally considered in a successful self-study.

Selecting the Organizational Scheme

Selecting the organizational scheme best suited for a particular institution is of utmost importance. An organizational scheme utilized by one college may not work as well for another. The ultimate criterion for the selection of the most appropriate organizational plan for the self-study is the comfort level it brings to the Coordinator and the Steering Committee. If the basic outline chosen for the self-study does not provide a more lucid plan of action, its retention should be carefully reconsideration.

There are potentially as many organizational schemes as there are institutions seeking initial or continued accreditation. As is the case with most activities that lend themselves to numerous permutations, a few dominant configurations emerge, these include:

- **The Evaluative Criteria Based Plan.** Among the mandatory aspects of an institution's self-study is the requirement that it addresses all five of the Evaluative Criteria as clearly articulated by the North Central Association. These criteria may serve as major chapter headings along with auxiliary chapters where needed to include such things as the General Institutional Requirements. The utilization of an appendix with this scheme is not uncommon. One possible draw back to this method is the fact that the five criteria tend to be so comprehensive that several areas of activities within an institution may be thrust together. This may make the flow of the narrative a little more difficult to adjust.

- **The General Institution Requirements (GIR) Plan.** North Central currently requires all institutions to respond directly to its twenty-four General Institutional Requirements. The nature of these items is such that some can be adequately responded to in a few sentences while others may require several pages of narrative. Given the rather large number of these requirements, an institution may elect to group several of these items together in a single chapter thereby reducing the number of chapters to eight or ten.

  Some may find that it is difficult to group these items in such as way so as to provide a smooth narrative that addresses the Five Evaluative Criteria but this can be done with careful planning and wording. The importance of these GIRs should never be underrated and their use in providing an organizational scheme is certainly worth considering.

- **The Institutional Functional Area Plan.** An inspection of various institutional self-study documents will reveal that the most common organizational scheme employed is usually some hybrid form of those mentioned above. The reason for this is probably that most Self-Study Coordinators tend to view the various activities of their institution segregated into the functional units of that institution. It is very common to see separate chapters on "Instruction," "Curriculum," "Student Services," "Physical Plant," and so on. By carefully grouping chapters together into "Units" or "Parts" and associating these groupings with particular Evaluative Criteria or GIRs a Coordinator along with his Steering Committee can gain ease of narrative flow and more certainty that all mandatory points get addressed.

Concluding Thoughts

Coordinating the writing of a successful Self-Study Report is a rigorous but rewarding experience. No two Self-Studies are the same, nor should they be. The final document will be a definitive introspective look at an institution. This document, if properly written, will reveal things about the institution that not everyone is aware of. Do not be afraid to describe what may be viewed as a problem area or deficiency of the institution. Indeed, not shedding light on areas such as these within the Self-Study Report will prove to work against the institution when the evaluation team members make these discoveries on their own. The thing to remember is that of reporting major weaknesses and describing what the institution intends to do about them and when.

The importance of the mission statement and how the institution's activities flow from this cannot be overstated. A well thought out organizational scheme for the self-study is paramount to an eventual satisfactory outcome. The Self-Study Coordinator needs to tell the world what the institution claims to be doing in its public documents. By means of a carefully orchestrated self-inspection, report what the institution is actually doing. As a last step describe in as clear of manner as possible to what extent the institution is accomplishing what it proclaims using as much hard data as are available.

Never forget that an institution seldom honors a faculty member or an administrator so much as when it selects this person to coordinate the execution and writing of a North Central Self-Study Report. Indeed, if a person feels that being selected for this job is more of a burden than anything else, he or she should resign at the first opportunity so that the institution can pass this responsibility on to someone who has the "vision."

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The Light at the End of the Tunnel: Editing the Self Study and Preparing for the Team's Visit

Marilyn Nelsen Carroll

Editing the Self-Study

Miracle of Miracles! All of the relevant data for the self-study have been collected and chapters have actually been written and submitted (except the chapter due from the one individual who constantly promises that it will be ready tomorrow, or at least soon). In any event, it is time to edit.

Perhaps you, as Self-Study Coordinator, foresaw this point and cudgeled someone into agreeing to be editor or perhaps you even have an entire committee for this function. It is equally possible that you, the Self-Study Coordinator, are also the editor. If this is indeed the case, you may be kicking yourself for not somehow convincing a member of the English department that serving as editor of a self-study is an absolute prerequisite for satisfactory career completion.

However, there are definite advantages to doing the editing yourself. (You will think of the disadvantages easily enough.) The Self-Study Coordinator has the clearest vision of what the self-study should be, how it is to be organized, how the various parts flow together, etc. In addition, having only one person (as opposed to a committee) do the editing, means that the style, wording, etc. can be changed so that the study reads as if it indeed were written by one person. It also means one less person to prod into meeting the inevitable last minute deadlines that occur because other people have not met the previous deadlines! Having served as both the Self-Study Coordinator and the editor, I recommend it. The advantages manifestly outweigh the disadvantages.

Although one individual may be doing the final editing, preliminary editing by other individuals is as easily built into the process. For example, at Rockhurst College, we had a relatively small steering committee (composed of four members plus the coordinator). These individuals were responsible for particular sections of the self-study, but, in most cases, did not actually write those sections. We used existing departments, programs, committees, etc. to do the writing whenever possible. Steering Committee members then combined these sections if necessary and did the preliminary editing. The Self-Study Coordinator did additional editing when she received the chapters. When the various drafts were circulated to selected individuals and later to the entire college community, some individuals made additional suggestions regarding both content and editing. In most, but not all, cases these suggestions and changes were incorporated into the final document. At this point, the final editing was not a particularly onerous task, since much editing had already been done.

Circulating the Draft of the Self-Study

It is sound strategy to regularly circulate preliminary drafts of all chapters to the most knowledgeable individuals involved in particular areas. For example, the academic vice-president, deans, department chairs, and members of academic departments should see early drafts of chapters concerning their areas of interest. Whether the president desires to see all or selected chapters of the early drafts depends upon the individual. Once the entire self-study draft has been completed, it should be made available to everyone on campus.

Many small institutions give every administrator and faculty member his/her own copy of the self-study draft. Unless the institution is very small, this becomes quite expensive and is probably a waste of money. It is incorrect to believe that everyone on campus is "living and breathing" the self-study and continued accreditation process just as we are. Despite our best efforts, many individuals on campus really are neither involved in nor particularly interested in the self-study process. They will not read the self-study nor submit any suggestions if they do read parts of it.

So what to do? Everyone on campus should be given the *opportunity* to give input into the self-study. Preliminary drafts of chapters should have been circulated to interested parties with requests for comments. Copies of the entire self-study draft can now be placed in various locations on campus. An effort should be made to publicize this fact, pointing out that everyone is encouraged to "check out" and read a copy and that comments are desired.

We placed multiple copies of our self-study in the offices of the president, vice-president, institutional research, all of the deans, and the faculty secretaries, and also in the library. These could be borrowed by any faculty or staff member. In addition, various administrators were given their personal copies.

As we expected, some of the administrators made many suggestions regarding content and also did some editing, but very few faculty or staff did so—although we do know that several did read much of it. The suggestions made were incorporated into a "final" final draft. By this time, we were on a "tight" schedule and there was not time to circulate the revised final draft to everyone. It was, however, reviewed once again by the President and by the Director of Institutional Research (the administrator to whom the self-study coordinator reported). They had relatively few suggestions for changes at this point and we were able to print the final copy. The self-study must be sent to the North Central Association and the evaluation team at least a month prior to the scheduled site visit.

Preparing for the Team Visit

Relatively few things need to be done on behalf of the evaluation team prior to the visit other than locating a hotel relatively close to campus. Team members will make their own reservations. The team chair will indicate whether the team plans to rent an automobile or will require transportation. S/he will also indicate if there are any meetings with groups or individuals that the team would like to have scheduled for it in advance. Other than these, the team members will wait until they arrive on campus to inform the college of the individuals with whom they would like to have appointments. It should not be assumed that the team will want to have appointments with any particular individual and certainly appointments should not be scheduled in advance unless requested by the team chair.

It is certain that the team will ask to have prescheduled opening and closing meetings with the president. The president will be told that s/he can invite whomever s/he wishes to these meetings. Some presidents invite very few people. In our case, the president invited approximately 20 people and arranged to have a continental breakfast and a light lunch served at these meetings, but this is neither common nor expected (and indeed, may not be desired, so it should be cleared with the team chair first). The team may also ask to have open meetings with faculty, staff, and students scheduled and publicized prior to the visit.

The evaluation team will need a private workroom on campus. The self-study committee's "document room" (in our case it was a "document file cabinet" plus a table containing copies of larger items) should be moved to that room and team members should be given a complete list of the available documents. (In our case, organizing and listing these documents occupied a fair amount of the Self-Study Coordinator's time in the weeks prior to the team's visit.) Teams may well require a computer and printer.

Ideally a secretary should be assigned to the team for the entire visit, although she/he will not always be actually doing things for the team. A major task of the secretary will be to arrange appointments for the team members with administrators and faculty members. Each team member will have his/her own list of people to be seen and some individuals may be seen by more than one team member to discuss different issues. Although it is usually relatively easy to arrange appointments with administrators (colleges usually urge them to be available as much as possible during the visit), it is considerably more difficult to schedule appointments with faculty. Even though faculty are encouraged to be on campus as much as possible during the time of the visit, one cannot assume that they will be.

It is thoughtful to provide refreshments (especially soft drinks and coffee) in the conference room for the team and to arrange for them to eat in the student cafeteria, if they wish. (Team members often use such time to chat informally with students.) Some colleges also provide bowls of fruit in the hotel rooms and/or give team members small, inexpensive gifts such as souvenir cups or pens from the college. Refreshments and gifts are neither necessary nor expected and certainly are unrelated to a team's recommendations regarding the college.

Informing the College Campus of the Visit

Ideally, everyone on campus is aware of the purpose of the team's visit. In reality this will not happen on most campuses, especially large ones. The final copy of the self-study should have been made available for at least a month prior to the visit and everyone should have been encouraged to read it. Rockhurst College gave copies of the completed self-study to the same administrators that had received the draft copy, put copies of it in all of the same places where we had put the draft copies, and in addition, made copies of it available in other offices where it was thought that staff members would be more likely to review it. Copies were also given to those members of the Board of Trustees with whom the team had prescheduled a meeting. Other members of the Board were given "executive summaries" and were provided an opportunity to review the entire document if they so wished.

Prior to the visit, the student newspaper carried an article about the self-study and the evaluation team. Regular announcements were published in the *Rockhurst Daily News*, a daily informational newsletter. Announcements and discussions were held at meetings of the Faculty General Assembly, President's Staff, Non-Faculty Employees' Association, Student Senate, meetings of individual colleges, etc. Some faculty talked about it in their classes, and at the time of the visit, encouraged students to attend the open meeting with the team. The Self-Study Coordinator also met with the Board of Trustees to discuss the results of the self-study and the upcoming visit by the evaluation team. (She had also met with the Board early in the process. In between these meetings, the Board was kept informed by the President.)

Despite these efforts I, as Self-Study Coordinator, was not as successful as I had hoped in informing the campus community. I do think that all administrators and faculty members (and probably the Board members) were at least aware of the self-study and the team's visit, but many staff members and certainly many students were not. I do suspect, however, that the lack of participation by many was more a function of lack of interest rather than a lack of awareness.

After the Visit - Celebrate!

In all probability, the team visit will go very smoothly. You will be surprised to see how well the team members understand your institution. You may also be surprised and delighted to learn that they are as interested in helping you discover the strengths of your institution as they are in helping you to confront its weaknesses. They take the role of *consultant*-evaluator very seriously. They do not view themselves primarily as evaluators nor inspectors—as some on your campus undoubtedly fear. When the campus malcontent slips notes to team members or brings up his/her personal pet peeves at the open forum, they will take them seriously, but also with a grain of salt, and will attempt to learn the truth of the matter. The team members are administrators and faculty members from institutions that have problems similar to your own. They too have their own campus malcontents!

It is probable that you will not be surprised by the recommendations of the team—whether or not it is what you hope it will be. Whatever the recommendation, you will now have cause to celebrate. You will have completed the self-study for this visit—at least your job as Self-Study Coordinator is over. You may well have learned that you have abilities and skills that you were unaware of having and you may have developed new ones as a result of this experience. (I was forced into the world of the computer! I had intended to go to grave without even turning one on!) The campus community should have become more aware of the institution's strengths and weaknesses and should now be prepared to use this knowledge to build an even stronger college.

Everyone on campus will have reason to celebrate. Whatever the outcome, the self-study process will have been a learning process for everyone involved. The Self-Study Coordinator and the members of the steering committee will be particularly entitled to a celebration, perhaps a glass of champagne and a toast to a job well done. The self-study has been a major part of your lives from anywhere from one and a half to three years and now you will be able to move on to other projects. Of course, you may also find that you have done such an outstanding job that you will be asked to lead the next self-study as well!

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The Site Visit

Carol Davis

We Were Ready!

We had toiled for two years to put together our self-study document and our committees were brushing their hands together to signify a "job well done." Every staff member at the College had been involved in the process and we felt we had not left a stone unturned in our self-evaluation. We felt ready to open our doors to the NCA evaluation team when it arrived.

Evaluation Team

As the time came to begin to prepare for the team visit, we coordinated our efforts with our NCA staff liaison, Steve Crow, in an attempt to organize a team of consultant-evaluators that was representative and somewhat knowledgeable of institutions like ours. We are a small (450-500 students) tribal controlled two-year college located on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota. Ninety-five percent of our student body is comprised of members of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. Our Mission, which was designed to provide an institution of higher education that would serve tribal members, was structured around the culture and heritage of the tribe. After some negotiation, we found a chair and a group of consultant-evaluators that we were confident would address our institution in a forthright manner. We had our team!

Preparing for the Visit

Once the team was in place, the team chair began working with our steering committee to prepare for our evaluation visit. There were travel details and site visit details that had to be addressed.

We helped to identify the best travel routes for the team, to find them a place to stay, and to arrange for meals while they were on campus. Together we prepared a schedule for their three-day visit. At the College, we began to put together a work room for the team.

Travel, Meals, and Lodging

Our reservation, which is located about ten miles south of the Canadian border in north central North Dakota, is more than one hundred miles from the nearest airport. As you can imagine, addressing the travel plans of the team was an essential part of our preparation. We offered to provide transportation from the airport. However, the team members chose to plan their arrival at the same time and to rent a vehicle. We did provide them with travel information that helped team members find their way from the airport to our reservation.

We were able to find them a nice motel in a small town located about 30 miles from the College. At the team's request, we made special arrangements for a meeting room. We also helped team members identify several good eating establishments in that area.

Since our College does not have a cafeteria, we did some special planning in order to provide several meals for them on our campus. All of this seemed to work well.

Work Area and Resource Room

Since our campus does not have elaborate facilities, we sectioned off a portion of a large office area for the team to share. In our consultation with the team chair we were able to provide the telephone, computers, and software that they preferred. Refreshments and snacks were also provided. We tried to make the area as comfortable and efficient as possible.

Before the visit we chose a self-study librarian from amongst our staff. She was assigned to prepare a library of institutional materials that could be presented as support for the data contained in the Self-Study Report. The data was organized and put into a file cabinet. If we addressed it in the self-study, we provided the proof in this file. For example, we stated in the self-study that our faculty held monthly meetings. In this file cabinet, we provided the minutes and notes from the faculty staff meetings. The drawers of the file cabinet corresponded with the chapters in the self-study. Everything we stated in the self-study was coded so that the team members could find the document in the file. Each team member was given a coded book and the self-study librarian introduced them to the file system when they arrived.

Evaluation Team Schedule

Several weeks before the visit, we faxed a tentative agenda to the team chair. When the agenda reached its final approval by both of us, it was copied and disseminated throughout the institution and the community. We wanted everyone to know that we were going through a self-study evaluation visit so we made radio announcements and had the information published in the local paper.

The evaluation team arrived on Sunday evening. Our visit was scheduled to span Monday through Wednesday. Our College President and I traveled to have supper with the team members on Sunday evening when they arrived. This gave all of us a chance to get acquainted and to review the agenda that we had prepared over some distance. We made some last minute changes and we were ready to go!

The team arrived on campus early the next day and we began the long-awaited site visit. It is customary to bring our spiritual leader to our campus when we undertake a task that will have a significant impact upon what happens at the institution. This was one of those occasions. Francis Cree guided us into our evaluation visit with an opening prayer and a welcome to our visitors. He gave us directions to take our duty seriously. His remarks were followed by a special song by our college drum group.

We made appointments with staff members for the team. A meeting with students was also on the team's agenda. We arranged two noon luncheons, one that included the evaluation team, tribal council, and boards of Directors and Trustees. The other luncheon involved the evaluation team and approximately forty community members. All of the meetings took place over the three-day period.

At the request of the team chair, the evenings were kept open so that the team members could meet, share findings, and prepare their reports. We honored that request.

As the three-day visit progressed, I had several anxiety attacks. There were times that I doubted whether the self study was well done. I wondered what was happening as the evaluation team crossed from here to there in pursuit of findings. I was concerned that information in the self-study might have needed more explanation. I wondered if our message was getting across.

Our exit meeting was scheduled and the entire staff was there to hear the results. What a relief it was to hear that things had gone well. As we bid a safe trip home to the evaluation team, we saw two years of hard work conclude with good results.

The Next Step . . .

In our next meeting, we were given a laundry list of items that would improve our institution. We are now in the process of addressing those recommendations.

Carol Davis is Vice President of Turtle Mountain Community College, Belcourt, ND.

Chapter III

Self-Study and Evaluation: Practical Advice

Making Connections: Technology and the Self-Study Process

Arlyss Grosz

Introduction

Higher education is facing an era of change precipitated by internal and external pressures. Politicians, the public, and the clientele of higher education are demanding more than ever before. Numerous and competing requests, coupled with shrinking resources, provide an opportunity to re-examine the traditional methods of providing programs and academic support services.

The wave of change took on new dimensions for the University of Minnesota, Crookston, in July 1993, when the University's Board of Regents adopted a resolution establishing UMC as a technical, baccalaureate degree-granting institution, with critical measures and benchmarks as a means of evaluating the development and progress as the institution evolves from a two-year to a four-year campus.

Technology Infrastructure

The utilization of technology is one of five key strategies adopted by the institution to guide campus decisions and assure success into the 21st century. In less than three years, creative management strategies and technological advances have led the institution to a new level of academic support. The institution currently has 12 LAN connected classrooms, equipped with power and network connections at every seat, for use with student notebook computers. In addition, the campus has in excess of 840 network nodes, with more being added. This figure should be viewed as roughly equivalent to the number of full-time students. The various buildings are connected to the Computer Center via fiber-optic cable. Wiring within the buildings is mostly 1 OBase T Ethernet. At present, the campus has five Novell servers that are connected to a FDDI backbone. This arrangement provides a cost-effective, robust networking system as required by our unusual computing environment. The campus network is connected via leased T1 cable to the global internet via Minneapolis. We are currently adding a second T1 line, with one line to be used for data and the other for compressed video.

Planning

Faculty and staff input to the self-study process is enhanced by the use of technology. Specific self-study planning tasks that can be facilitated with technology include:

- Development of the self-study objectives
- Development and distribution of the self-study time line
- Compilation and distribution of concerns from the last self-study

- Distribution of preliminary self-study outline
- Summary of existing assessment/evaluation data
- Determination of evaluation methodologies to be used in gathering and analyzing incomplete or missing data
- Gaining attention and sustaining interest in the self-study process

The extensive computing environment with mobile notebook computers for students and faculty, computers and LAN connections in all campus offices, and off campus dial-in access, day or night, provided the ideal support structure to facilitate and streamline the self-study process. Utilization of computer technology allowed the institution to focus on assessment tasks in a manner that was more efficient and expedient than would have been possible if restricted by limitations of clerical support.

While planning sessions and working group meetings did occur during the self-study process, electronic mail and voice mail were used to supplement face-to-face meetings. Limiting the number of traditional meetings allowed faculty and staff to maintain their regular schedule, and also actively participate in the self-study process. Providing information and responding to self-study questions could be done day or night and was not limited to a specific hour and day of week. Mobile computing environments transcend traditional time and space barriers.

A retrospective look at the self-study process finds that additional efficiencies could have been achieved with the use of Collabra, a groupware product currently available on campus. While electronic mail does allow ongoing discussion between individuals, it is more cumbersome than software specifically designed for group interaction. In addition, groupware encourages deliberation, facilitates equal participation and discussion of issues among committee members, and also includes a vehicle for campus-wide participation.

Data Collection and Management

Efficiencies in the management and presentation of data facilitated with technology include:

- object linking and embedding
- transformation of raw data into charts, graphs
- opportunities to merge and display data in a variety of ways
- filing raw data with source documents
- electronic survey instruments

The UMC faculty and staff, along witn department and unit coordinators, used a variety of resources for data collection and used Microsoft Excel and Powerpoint to store and display data. Faculty and staff reviewed recent program and unit evaluations using the five NCA accreditation criteria as the guide to differentiate between descriptive and evaluative data. Statistical information contained in the institution's electronic Management Information System and/or the Institutional Research office was available upon request from the respective directors. In addition, the library established a special self-study section to meet the research and reference needs of faculty, staff, and other interested members of the campus community

Surveys, developed with the use of testing and surveying software from LXR Technologies, expedited the survey process and allowed faculty, students, staff and employers to participate in on-line assessment. Using testing software eliminated the necessity for individual scoring and reduced the time delay between assessment, receiving results, and self-study preparation.

Collaborative Writing

Each campus department and unit conducted an assessment of its respective areas and each developed an electronic document that included:

- responses to specific department/unit concerns expressed in the previous Self-Study Report
- a formal description of the department/unit, including budget and staffing
- assessment measures to determine effectiveness of the department/unit
- department/unit strengths and opportunities for improvement
- action plan for the department/unit

Department and unit reports were reviewed by each of the self-study coordinators and sections flagged for transfer to the institutional Self-Study Report. Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office, which includes Word, Excel, and Powerpoint, is the standard software loaded on all faculty, staff, and student computers. Early in the planning phase of the self-study process, format criteria and style sheets for all self-study documents were established. Such standardization increased productive time, eliminating the need to translate and reformat documents, and maximized use of "point and click," "drag and drop" technology.

Review and Revision

Self-study review and revision was aided by having all source documents on-line with the ability to cut, paste and have multiple documents open simultaneously. One example was the development of a single listing of institutional strengths and opportunities, which are typically dispersed throughout the document. Without an on-line document, this would typically have taken an hour of secretarial assistance.

Self-study is enhanced as technology makes the process less cumbersome and permits faculty and staff to focus on the institution and how to better serve students. Colleges and universities must create an integrated information infrastructure to support administration instruction, research and outreach activities. Productivity is improved when students, faculty, and staff have the ability to connect to library information, colleagues, applications, and computing resources in a distributed environment on campus and beyond.

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Organizing and Utilizing Steering Committees for an NCA Self-Study

Anita H. Lupo

One of the first efforts of a Self-Study Coordinator for an NCA self-study is the selection of the Steering Committee. A Steering Committee provides the foundation for and direction to an institution's self-study efforts. The *Handbook of Accreditation, 1994-96*, indicates that the Steering Committee should broadly represent the institution.

The Steering Committee is charged with assisting the coordinator in three primary tasks: the development of the self-study plan, the coordination of the implementation of the plan, and the preparation of the Self-Study Report. Steering Committee members are the "pulse takers" of the institution and as such help frame a self-study plan that is broadly based and reflective of the growth, current status, and future direction of the institution. The steering committee members must know the institution well for collectively they will survey the entire institution. It is important that steering committee members communicate with various constituencies and communicate *often*. Meetings should be frequent (at least once a week) and of sufficient length of time to develop a thorough and comprehensive plan that fits the institution's history and mission. Pages 72 and 73 of the *Handbook of Accreditation, 1994-96* provide expectations of what the self-study plan should include.

Once a self-study plan is formulated, the steering committee becomes crucial to the process of identifying and gathering information. In some institutions much of the data needed will be located in just one or two offices or on a computer mainframe. However, there are still admissions offices, college offices, and other units that collect data. These data can be extremely useful to the Steering Committee. At some institutions steering committees may choose to gather information by collecting department information and creating a college profile. Still, other steering committees may conduct surveys and analyze survey results as a major component of their self-study. The more broadly based the steering committee the more likely appropriate data will be collected.

The term self-study refers both to a process and a product, the Self-Study Report. As you may have heard before, there's no "right" way to organize the report. The Steering Committee is a valuable resource to the Coordinator when determining the format of the report. Given the requirements of the NCA, the Steering Committee members should be able to give counsel as to the structure of the Self-Study Report.

Members of the steering committee provide input in developing the self-study plan in addition to providing a communication linkage with various constituencies and assisting in providing appropriate data collection. These individuals need to have a willingness to commit to the process and to work! Invaluable to the entire process of the self-study will be committee members who are focused on the purposes of the steering committee and who are dedicated to assisting the coordinator with 1) developing the self-study plan, 2) coordinating its implementation, and 3) preparing the Self-Study Report.

The size of the steering committee should be related to the size and complexity of the institution. If a thorough institutional self-evaluation is desired then the committee should be large enough to adequately represent the entire institution. A self-study process that has broad institutional involvement has greater institutional ownership and therefore is more likely to be valued by the institution. The first effort in selecting members of the steering committee should be devoted to identifying the major units that report to the president of the institution. Next, review those units two levels below the president. These two reporting levels should provide representation of the breadth of the institution. Once the breadth of the institution is covered efforts should be turned to selecting membership from the broad array of functions within this administrative framework. There is no ideal number for membership on the steering committee. Three members is probably not enough; forty is probably too many. Realistically steering committees should be comprised of 10-20 individuals depending on the size and complexity of the institution.

The selection of individuals to fill the various slots is a critical task. Most coordinators will find that variety provides good counsel. Some members should have a long history at the institution; some relative new-comers are helpful. Some members should have direct daily contact with students; some administrators that tend to see the "big picture" are helpful. Each individual selected to be on the Steering Committee should command the respect of peers, be knowledgeable about the institution, enthusiastic about the self-study process, and a good communicator.

Included in the membership of the Self-Study Steering Committee should be students who are well-oriented to the institution. Along with membership characteristics mentioned above consideration should be given to the student's level of study. A two-year commitment to the self-study process is desirable.

Subcommittees complement the efforts of the Steering Committee. Whether your institution is small or large, simple or complex in structure, it is often advantageous to spread out the tasks related to the self-study process. Subcommittees may be formed and it is helpful if steering committee members become a liaison to a subcommittee. The Steering Committee liaison can provide overall direction to the subcommittee. This organization also provides for a broader-based community involvement and allows for greater institutional ownership. Subcommittees provide an opportunity for many individuals to contribute to the institution's self-study process. Working with subcommittees very frequently enhances the knowledge of all committee members. For example, a subcommittee assigned to the resources of the institution may address human, fiscal, and physical resources. Persons from the budget office learn more about the human resource function as the subcommittee gathers data and completes its report to the Steering Committee. This type of Steering Committee organization (utilizing subcommittees) leverages the knowledge base of the institution and helps focus that breadth of knowledge into the Self-Study Report.

Institutional improvement can be achieved through the self-study process. It is more likely to be achieved and is more likely to be substantial if a strong Steering Committee is actively involved. The key to an effective Steering Committee is the way the group is organized and utilized.

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Mission, Assessment, and the Self-Study: Maintaining Warp Speed

Albert P. Kretz
Mary Ann Janosik
Stephen A. Yachanin

Mission and the Self-Study Process

The self-study process began at Lake Erie College early in 1992. As part of a draft on student academic assessment, the College collected all data necessary for this plan and noted information that would be needed for future evaluations. The existing Mission Statement became a focus for this early stage of assessment planning. It was vital that any assessment be compatible with the College's goals and educational philosophy.

The Mission Statement, adopted in September 1987, had been a source of discussion among faculty and administration because of several identifiable concerns:

- it was too long and lacked a clear focus;
- it was more descriptive of the College than philosophical in its purpose;
- it no longer reflected the academic and institutional changes that had taken place at the College since its adoption.

Once noted for its international approach to a liberal arts education, emphasizing an academic semester abroad, Lake Erie College enrolled more majors in Business Administration and Teacher Education in 1992 than it had in earlier years. The one constant from its laudable past was a strong and nationally recognized Equestrian Program. Those changes underscored one reason to re-evaluate the College's expressed Mission. They also presented the College community with the challenge of defining itself in terms that would accurately represent what the College is and would be in the future.

Pre-North Central Assessment of the Mission Statement

Lake Erie College set aside one day in March 1993 for the entire College community to gather and review its goals and objectives. In a day-long retreat, various members from faculty, administration, and the Board of Trustees identified the College's strengths and weaknesses, needs and concerns, and goals for the immediate future.

It became clear re-evaluating the Mission Statement was critical in the self-study process, but it was too early to write a new one, since many other recommendations for change (i.e., academic, administrative, and financial) had not yet been assessed. Rather, a North Central Steering Committee, called by the President, used the information gathered at the retreat as part of the final Self-Study Report.

Lake Erie College's recommendation on the Mission Statement, as reported in the self-study, asks that a committee be created to re-evaluate and, if necessary, rewrite the Mission Statement to reflect the College as it emerged from a transitional period.

The North Central evaluation team concurred with the self-study's assessment on mission, emphasizing that the College needed to define itself in clear, identifiable terms representative of the College community at large.

Post-NCA Activities

In June 1994, less than four months after the NCA team visit, and before submission of a final team report, Lake Erie College began the task of rewriting its Mission Statement. At a series of meetings held over the summer, members of the College Council and other appropriate faculty and staff discussed the College's history, assessed the merits of its academic programs and educational philosophy, and drafted a new Mission Statement.

The proposed Mission Statement is concise and clear in its focus and purpose. The only area of debate has been the elimination of the phrase "liberal arts" from the earlier Mission Statement, a sensitive and critical area to many faculty members and alumni in identifying Lake Erie's rich international heritage. That phrase notwithstanding, most members of the College community felt the proposed Mission Statement would serve as a guide for a Strategic Planning Council's consideration for institutional advancement into the next century.

The College Council representatives also addressed the issue of the general education requirements. The committee drafted guidelines that would be submitted to a faculty committee for review and modification before presentation to the faculty as a whole.

During a third series of meetings, by another group from the College Council, changes in the number of academic majors and in the number of credit hours required for definition of a major were proposed. As suggested by the NCA evaluation team, the College recognized a need to emphasize its areas of strength, decrease the breadth of its offerings, and allow for more student-directed electives.

Academic Assessment Efforts: Organized Confusion

Efforts to develop a Student Academic Achievement Assessment Program began in 1989 under the guidance of the then Dean of the College. The Dean introduced a variety of initiatives designed to establish a basic and sound foundation for further assessment development. Those initiatives included a revision of general education requirements, a casting of Mission goals and purposes into more objective and measurable statements, identification of classes within each goal from which students could select, and standardization of information and format of course syllabi.

Like many institutions struggling to understand what assessment was all about, the faculty made slow and awkward steps in completing those initiatives, but none really understanding the "big picture." Viewed alternatively as a function of administrative style, a failure of the faculty to make the necessary connections between the NCA mandate and the Dean's initiatives, or a combination of both, small groups of faculty worked, more or less, in isolation on their designated tasks, uncertain of the relationship between their work and that of their colleagues. While considerable activity occurred, it made little sense to the faculty, but the Dean was encouraged and satisfied with the work being accomplished.

Assessment Time-Out

While not a comprehensive student academic achievement assessment program by any means, the College did have a set of formal educational goals that represented its Mission, a new set of general education requirements, and standard course syllabi. It was unfortunate for assessment efforts that the Dean left shortly after completion of the above initiatives. New issues and concerns arose, priorities changed, and assessment efforts came to a halt.

Not until discussion of preparing for the next self-study began in 1992 did the reality of the state of the College's assessment program again come to light. Immediate steps were taken to review previous work on assessment and to begin learning more about assessment in general.

Providing Clay for Sculpting

After some consideration, the Educational Policies and Planning Committee began to engage faculty within each academic discipline in small groups to continue the work undertaken in previous years. Progress was made, but the committee members came to realize their approach was not substantially different from that of the previous Dean; excellent assessment ideas were developed, but in isolation. Only the Co-Chairs and some Steering Committee members had a sense of the connectedness of the work being conducted by the faculty. It was necessary to assemble those ideas in one place to provide a complete picture of the developing assessment program; a proposal would have to be developed.

The Co-Chairs of the North Central Steering Committee agreed it would be impossible to request the faculty, as a whole, to "develop a comprehensive assessment program." Such a request would surely have been met with little enthusiasm and would have resulted in little, if any, progress. However, it was recognized that if a comprehensive proposal for assessment were to be presented to the faculty, they, like any group of academics, would immediately begin to comment, criticize, debate, and suggest improvements and alternatives to the proposal. The proposal would serve as the lump of clay in front of the artist; the faculty would sculpt the clay as they deemed appropriate.

The Site Visit

The NCA evaluation team visited Lake Erie's campus in February 1994. As team members interviewed various faculty, it became their impression faculty had not been substantially involved in the development of the assessment program, nor had faculty developed sufficient ownership of the assessment program. The proposed assessment program was, nonetheless, judged acceptable by the NCA team with recommendations to have faculty become more involved in continued development and to increase efforts to instill a sense of ownership.

The sense of non-involvement was true in large part because of the rather isolated nature with which assessment activities were conducted. Lack of ownership was, of course, a direct consequence of that isolation.

Post-Site Visit

Having heard stories of institutions breathing a collective sigh of relief and slipping into complacency following a successful NCA site visit, the College was committed to maintaining the momentum achieved during the self-study and not relax its assessment efforts. A self-examination, based on the comments and impressions of the NCA team, was deemed necessary.

It became clear a single individual was needed to coordinate assessment activities across campus and to keep faculty, staff, and administration informed and involved in ongoing development and revision. Following the luxury of a long and sound night's sleep, a proposal was developed to establish the position of Director of Institutional Assessment. That position would be responsible for reevaluating institution-wide assessment activities, including student academic achievement assessment, coordinate all assessment activities, propose changes in assessment, and keep "assessment" in the minds of all constituencies.

The Director of Institutional Assessment would report directly to the President of the College, sending a clear signal to the campus regarding the importance of ongoing assessment efforts.

Additionally, it was agreed the Academic Assessment Committee, a recently proposed standing faculty committee, would begin its duties as soon as the committee was duly constituted. The first charge of the committee was to begin examining the proposed student academic achievement assessment program, propose revisions, and bring the proposal to the faculty for discussion.

The activity of the Assessment Committee had the effect of immediately involving more faculty in the development process and increasing the sense of ownership that is a natural consequence of devoting time, thought, and effort on a project.

While the proposed plan for student academic achievement assessment program was acceptable to the NCA team, considerable work remained before it could be implemented. To get more faculty directly involved, several faculty meetings were used as assessment workshops to discuss student assessment and work on various parts of the assessment program. Additionally, the Director of Institutional Assessment began meeting, individually or in small groups, faculty, staff, and administrators. A periodic "Assessment Newsletter" was published to keep College constituencies informed of assessment issues, answer assessment questions, and provide good examples of assessment developed by colleagues.

The above process serves to keep "assessment" in front of everyone. If not increasing enthusiasm and excitement across all constituencies, it has instilled a sense of importance and value for ongoing assessment and a willingness to give serious consideration, time, and effort on the part of many.

Administration

Administration adopted a pro-active stance following the NCA site visit in February 1994. The exit interview comments formed the basis of relatively rapid action.

The College Council, commissioned by the President and led by the Dean, reviewed the above mentioned Mission Statement, general education requirements, and degree requirements. Somewhat amazingly, those reviews were completed in less than one month. Yes! It can be done.

During the summer, the President held several retreats for his Cabinet. One of the items generated during the retreat was an outline for a new strategic plan. The President commissioned a Strategic Planning Council, co-chaired by a member of the Board of Trustees and an Associate Dean. That Council, originated in late August 1994, began work immediately and is progressing at a relatively rapid pace. The goal is completion of a five-year Strategic Plan by late Spring of 1995. Referees, assigned to review the draft report prepared by the NCA evaluation team, were pleased to learn of the rapid response of the College to concerns and recommendations offered by that team.

The College is now actively establishing its direction, clarifying its goals, and implementing procedures to assess its success. To quote from the Executive Summary of the NCA Report: "Finally, although much remains to be done, much has been accomplished and there is a reasonable optimism that the College will continue to fulfill its purposes and be strengthened in the foreseeable future." Realistically, the future has never looked better; rather than moving on impulse, the College is maintaining warp speed.

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The Resource Room: An Important Ingredient in the Self-Study Process

Janet I. Valencia
Gary D. Schultz

Introduction

Colby Community College is a comprehensive two-year institution serving more than 2,000 students in its 14-county service area of northwestern Kansas. The college played host to a NCA site visit in September 1994 and was recommended for continued accreditation with the next comprehensive evaluation in ten years.

The Concept of a Resource Room

In preparation for the NCA visit, the steering committee at Colby Community College was reminded of a Japanese proverb, which states that when you are thirsty it is too late to think about digging a well. Advanced planning for the resource room was critical. The committee selected a central location where all resources required by the NCA evaluation team would be available and efficiently organized to assist them in their research. In addition, the resource room would serve as the primary work area for the team.

Access to additional information not in the self-study, via the resource room, is an important aspect of the team visit. It is vital that the evaluators come to the realization early in their visit that if they have need of documentation, it will be found in the resource room.

At Colby Community College, individuals who wrote various segments of the Self-Study Report were requested to be generous in referencing materials that could be found in the resource room. As a result, the completed study had 71 references to materials that could be found in the resource room. Also, 307 additional pieces of information were cataloged and placed in the resource room.

In addition, the initial rough draft and outline of the Self-Study Report contained numerous suggestions to the writers on the type of information that might be in the resource room that could be referenced in the self-study. In this manner, the writers were encouraged to think past the document and into the resource room. The steering committee was reminded at each of its meetings that the resource room should be an area that included all of the information of the college that demonstrated our fulfillment of the General Institutional Requirements and the Criteria for Accreditation.

Organization of the Room

If material is present in the resource room, then it should be accessible in an easily obtainable manner. The steering committee sought to appoint a single staff member who was familiar with the self-study and plans of assessment, and who displayed organizational skills, to develop the resource room. Work began approximately four months prior to the September visit by the NCA evaluation team.

First, a check list of all referenced material from the Self-Study Report was collected and physically moved to the resource room. Each item was identified and marked as to its fulfillment of either a General Institutional Requirement and/or one of the Criteria for Accreditation.

Although no formal requirements on how the room was to be organized were provided, one theme occurred time and time again—the resources presented in the room must assist in demonstrating that the institution successfully met all of the Criteria and General Institutional Requirements established by North Central.

The resource room was located in the Board of Trustees' meeting room, which is adjacent to the Office of the President and deans of Instruction, Fiscal Affairs, and Community Services. This permitted team members quick access to these officers.

Gathering all of the material needed for the resource room required the cooperation of many faculty and staff members. The focus was on gathering material produced since the last site visit in 1984. While the volume of the material was great, and the origin of the material diverse, it was concluded that the most important materials to be included were: self-study; plan of assessment; faculty and staff credentials; syllabi; survey instruments and results; agendas and meeting minutes from the Board of Trustees, Administrative Council, Academic Council and other important committees; student tracking information; CAAP test results; grant materials; financial reports; and campus publications. Institutional video and audio tapes were also included along with a host of additional items.

Most faculty and staff members contributed items from their respective areas that were identified by each chapter and the steering committee. The archival section of the library also proved to be a valuable source of material.

After all of the material available was gathered, the task of categorizing the material began. All material was organized to provide patterns of evidence to support the General Institutional Requirements and/or specific Criteria for Accreditation. The patterns of evidence list actually consisted of three smaller lists—resource room items, the self-study's fulfillment of the General Institutional Requirements, and the answers to the plan of assessment's five evaluative questions and a preface.

An index identifying all patterns of evidence included in the resource room was developed. This index included a preface document that identified where within our self-study document each General Institutional Requirement was addressed. The index that was provided to each of the evaluation team members resulted in a 35 page document.

The individuals developing the self-study document identified all items addressing the General Institutional Requirements in the margins within the document. From this an index was developed that identified the physical location of all items in the resource room that served as patterns of evidence in support of these requirements. In addition, the index included items in the resource room that enhanced the patterns of evidence for all the General Institutional Requirements.

The last pattern of evidence addressed was the Colby Community College Assessment Plan. This document demonstrated how the college would address assessment within each program and course as well as institution wide. How the plan met each of the evaluative questions was determined and an index identifying on which pages within the plan they were addressed was developed. Forty-seven items were identified within the margin of the assessment document that supported the five evaluative questions. The objective of these indices was to make the information needed by the evaluation team as accessible as possible.

To organize and display all the material, three browsing racks, three four-drawer filing cabinets, two bookcases, a credenza, a computer, and a work station were requested.

The browsing racks contained visibly pleasing items such as catalogs, viewbooks, yearbooks, magazines, recruiting brochures, and handbooks. Items that were or could be bound were placed on the bookshelves, including the assessment plan documentation by program and course. The items that could not be readily displayed on browsing racks or bookshelves were contained in file cabinets organized by chapter (criterion).

Conclusion

Organization of the resource room took several weeks, but the effort paid dividends when the North Central evaluation team arrived. They were excited and pleased to see all of the documentation they would require in one area and referenced for ease of access. With the exception of two items, the evaluation team found all of the requested material in the room. After the exit interview, the evaluation team members were very complimentary of the resource room concept and its organization.

The resource room also provided the team members with the sense that Colby Community College was very open and honest in its operations and proud to present materials that proved its effectiveness.

When one considers all of the work that must be done in preparation for a site visit, the resource room concept may not appear to be a high-priority project; but when one considers the work that must be accomplished by the evaluation team in its limited time on campus, a resource room should prove to be a valuable asset to NCA evaluation team members and the institution. It certainly proved to be an asset to Colby Community College.

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Making Order of All of This: The Draft-Revision Process and the Development of the Resource Room

David B. Anderson

As a newly appointed Self-Study Coordinator, I eagerly read all the available advice. I attended the NCA Annual Meeting sessions for new coordinators. I arranged for our NCA liaison to visit our campus and provide advice to me and others who would work on the project. In retrospect, most all of the advice I solicited was helpful. The sample self-studies I gathered up were also helpful, because they provided examples of how other coordinators and institutions had solved the same problems we faced.

Still, two working processes that were largely unmentioned in all the conventional advice, and not at all apparent in the sample documents, became very important as we prepared for the review. I believe both made for a better team visit; I know both kept stress levels low during the preparation process.

One working process was the draft-revision time lines we used; the other, the development of the resource room. Both are order makers in what can be an intimidating process.

The Draft Revision Process

Essentially the Self-Study Report was developed in four drafts. The drafting was begun about a year before the team visit. The first draft was unbound and distributed to the steering committee (about 25 members) in three parts. Several meetings of the steering committee, six to eight months prior to the visit, were devoted to the revision of the first draft. These meetings, scheduled well in advance, provided deadlines for completing the draft sections of the self-study. Many changes, simple corrections and changes in substance, resulted from these meetings.

About five months before the visit we scheduled two open hearings on the self-study. To prepare for these hearings, we distributed about one hundred bound copies of the study as revised in steering committee meetings. These were marked "hearings draft" on the cover and on every page.

The distribution of the "hearings draft" included the steering committee, central administration, deans, department chairs, program directors, some committee chairs, student leaders, an area citizen group, a Regent, and the reserve desk in the library. The hearings and the availability of the draft were well-publicized.

A third draft, also marked "hearings draft," but with a different cover and date, incorporated the changes made as a result of the distribution and the hearings. Most of the changes were more nearly corrections than changes in substance. One major organizational change, however, was made at this date.

Only a few copies of this third draft were made, one for the Chancellor's office, one each for the Vice-Chancellors, one for the Coordinator, and one for the NCA liaison. This draft allowed a final review by people at the highest levels of responsibility and a chance for the NCA liaison to offer final advice. Coordinators should call their NCA liaison to see if he or she would find it helpful to review this next-to-final draft.

The final draft incorporated a few more corrections and some new format elements like the tab dividers. Distribution of the final draft included the Administrative Council, some off-campus people who would be meeting with the evaluation team, and the NCA liaison. Additional copies where held for further NCA actions and for distribution to other interested groups, like the Coordinating Commission for Post secondary Education and University of Nebraska Central Administration. We made about fifty copies of the final draft.

All drafts were produced on-campus, using PageMaker and equipment in the copy center. This technology, which allowed several drafts to easily evolve, made the process more open and more effective.

The time lines imposed as each draft was made ready for its audience and the resulting open, orderly review of the document made the work a very positive experience. And, because drafts were widely distributed and hearings were well publicized, the campus was informed; aware of the importance of the review, supportive of the process, and helpful to the individual team members as they met groups and individuals across the campus.

A sequence of drafts like the above, with time lines and particular distribution lists in mind, brings order to the process and the sense that things are moving in a meaningful direction. Crisis and panic are held at bay.

The Development of the Resource Room

Early on, we began to think of the self-study as a three-level "document." The actual self-study document, divided into a nine chapter text and an accompanying volume of appendices, represented the first two levels. The third level was the resource room.

The writer/editor of the self-study is faced with dozens of decisions as to what to include in the study and at what level of specificity. Much of the material gathered and developed by working groups is appropriate to the self-study document only in summary form. But the complete materials can be made available to the evaluation team in the resource room.

As a working process, we developed the list of resource room materials while drafting the bound document. As each item was added to the list, a note was added in the text that additional materials were available in the resource room. When the actual visit was at hand, we used that list to set up the resource room, adding some materials called for in NCA publications. We also equipped the resource room with some computing equipment for the team's use during the visit and some other creature comforts such as coffee, juice, etc.

The materials were organized and labeled along the lines of the chapter divisions in the self-study. Lists of the materials were distributed to team members and a poster-sized version of the list was on the wall in the room. (We also put up posters of past academic conferences and other campus activities that had shown up in the material gathering process.)

The Self-Study Coordinator should implore the working groups and various campus areas to inundate him or her with documents and data. Then the job is to decide what belongs in the text, what should be made an appendix, and what should be in the resource room.

The coordinator will not have a neat office while all this is going on, but the clutter in the office is not intimidating if it has purpose and destination. To look at the mess and understand that order will emerge from it all is a comforting thought.

Summary

These two processes—working with time line drafts that provide response from the campus community and developing the resource room throughout the self-study process—lead to a relatively stress-free trip through a potentially intimidating job. The order they provide allows the coordinator to know what and when, and to a large degree, who, where, and how. If those questions all have answers, the coordinator can take the rest of the day off.

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Danger Zones for Vocational-Technical Institutes and Private Schools Seeking Accreditation

Paul McInturff

Introduction

This session is designed to serve as a guide for vocational-technical institutes and private schools that are in the process of pursuing accreditation or that are making the change to comprehensive community college status. It is a summary of the possible pitfalls to avoid and how to be properly prepared for the self-study and the site visit.

Background

During the last few years, I have worked with vocational-technical institutes and private schools for accreditation purposes for North Central and in a private consulting capacity in assisting them in determining their readiness for undertaking accreditation. I have found that in general they all have common weaknesses. These weaknesses can hinder the accreditation process and lead to less than desirable outcomes for the institution. These same weaknesses can also make the accreditation experience a difficult process for all concerned.

Plan

During this session, I will deliver a program to representatives from these types of institutions in which each of the identified weaknesses will be addressed. This will save them much wasted time from repeating the same mistakes and will enable them to identify weaknesses in their institutions and self-studies and successfully deal with them before submitting a self-study and going through a site visit.

Many times institutions will submit a self-study that is inadequate because they have failed to address the issues and have failed to recognize weaknesses and develop a plan for correcting the weakness. They will learn how to correct those weaknesses or at least develop a plan for correcting them before actually going through the accreditation process and being turned down or achieving less than desirable results.

Topics

1. Understanding of the Accreditation Process
2. Composition of the Self-Study Committee
3. Your Self-Study
4. What Is Your Image?

5. Mission Statement
6. Review of Curricula
7. General Education
8. Composition of Faculty
9. Role of Advisory Committees
10. Role of Board of Trustees
11. Support Services
    - Library
    - Audio Visual
    - Placement
    - Assessment
    - Developmental Education
    - Follow-up

Conclusion

Similar institutions have common weaknesses. During the presentation these common weaknesses will be identified and discussed. By identifying and understanding the mistakes of others and learning how to correct them, the accreditation process can be smoother and more rewarding. There will be time for questions and answers.

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Practical Advice for Gaining and Maintaining Active Involvement in the Self-Study Process

R. Charles Byers
Charles T. Ledbetter

Accreditation in our colleges and universities rests on a strong foundation, but Self-Study Coordinators encounter a major task in erecting a process framework—the self-study—that is fully supported. Faculty, staff, students, and administrators often differ significantly in their views of how much of their personal involvement is necessary to achieve a successful self-study.

Background

Regional accrediting agencies take seriously the importance of the institutional self-study as a major tool for improvement. Therefore, accrediting agencies, like the North Central Association, dictate that "the self- study process be a formal comprehensive self-examination that involves members from all internal constituencies." Gaining and maintaining active involvement in the self-study process is viewed as leading the institution to the establishment of both a capacity and propensity for continued improvement.

While it is generally agreed within the academic community that active involvement in the self-study process provides an avenue for continued improvement of the institution, little practical advice is given in the literature on how to gain and maintain involvement from all elements of the college community. Like most people-oriented processes, it is not easy to get people involved in a long term process and even more difficult to maintain that involvement.

Prior to beginning this institution's self-study, an analysis of the College's last self-study process was conducted. Two suggestions for improving on the last self-study were to ensure a broad representation from the college community and to give consideration to the fixed time commitments of those asked to become involved. Having recently completed the self-study process, sharing some practical lessons learned seemed appropriate.

Starting with a HOT Attitude

Gaining and maintaining active involvement in the self-study starts with the attitude of the coordinator toward honesty, organizing, and time (HOT). First and foremost, the coordinator must be honest with all constituents about every facet of the process to gain and maintain support for the self-study. Second, the coordinator must recommend to the President an organizational structure that is capable of establishing the policies and procedures required to lead the college through an institution-wide self-examination. Lastly, the coordinator must be aware and must make others aware of the time constraints. Everyone must agree on the time that will be spent on the research, analysis, discussion, and formulation phases of the self-study. If the coordinator starts with a "hot" attitude, others will warm up quickly to the idea of getting involved in the process.

Practical Advice for Gaining Active Involvement

- Create a collegial community that is in support of the self study
    - — answer the Big Question, "Why is this important to me?"
    - — demonstrate how the benefits outweigh costs
    - — instill a sense of identification and relationship
    - — promote a together or "We"/"Our" approach to all endeavors
    - — assure everyone the goal really is to determine your institution's strengths and weaknesses
- Build a self-study process that ensures you know what is happening
    - — make a realistic assessment of the college/university environment
    - — examine institutional politics
    - — recognize internal and external obstacles to change
    - — determine how to involve everyone in the self-study process
- Never forget the importance of the communication flow
    - — establish an open and trustworthy position in all undertakings
    - — recognize the value of each opinion expressed
    - — accept constructive criticism with a positive attitude
- Effectively manage the resources and support required to complete a self-study
- Establish an organized framework of operation

Practical Advice for Maintaining Active Involvement

- Maintain a collegial community that is in support of the self-study
    - — work with your colleagues
    - — be patient and have empathy
    - — implement the suggestions in a timely fashion
    - — do not assume that others place the same importance on request
    - — always "thank" those who contribute
- Maintain a self-study process that ensures you know what is happening
    - — have a system for monitoring the self-study process
    - — determine what specifically needs improvement
    - — stay alert for the opinion leaders
    - — understand how to set directions for the self-study in a complex, changing college/university environment
    - — establish a cognitive interaction analysis system—enhancing discussions
- Never forget the importance of the communication flow

  - constantly look for ways to obtain a freer exchange of ideas
  - keep all constituents continually informed of the process and progress

- Effectively manage the resources and support required to complete a self-study

  - establish situations and conditions that aid in motivation
  - make a list of useful reports to produce
  - manage implementation efficiently

- Maintain an organized framework of operation

  - become a catalyst of change
  - identify the strengths and weaknesses
  - determine how to make tough decisions come easier

Results

An analysis of our recently completed self-study revealed a positive perception among all elements of the college community regarding the process. Following the advice given above from the earliest stage of the process and continuing all the way through is more likely to lead to consensus among constituencies that we had been effective in the self-study process.

Summary

From our viewpoint, in gaining and maintaining active involvement in the self-study process, our institution successfully added three stories to its foundation. On the first floor, the Self-Study Coordinator addressed the genuine requirement to get broad active representation; on the second floor, the coordinator met the reasonable concerns of the constituencies regarding time constraints; and on the top floor, the coordinator achieved a connection between gaining and maintaining active involvement that led to a good Self-Study Report and continued improvement of the institution.

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Chapter IV

Coordinating Special Types of Visits

Coordinating the Self-Study for the Candidacy Program

Diane O. Tebbetts

Ozarka Technical College is a small, rural comprehensive two-year college in Melbourne, Arkansas, and one of a group of former vocational-technical schools elevated to collegiate status by legislative act in 1991. That act linked each new institution's continuing existence to gaining NCA accreditation by 1997, a time span considerably shorter than that normally required to achieve initial candidacy and progress to accreditation.

As always is the case, anxiety about how to gain initial candidacy was intense. With no structured faculty involvement in governance, no local long-range planning process, and no formal accreditation plan, gaining candidacy appeared formidable. And because Ozarka was in the first group of Arkansas technical colleges to complete the NCA Preliminary Information Form (PIF) process and begin self-study, we could not rely on the experience of our peers for guidance in what worked and what did not. With a strenuous campus-wide effort during the fall of 1992, the self-study document was completed in time for a team visit in March 1993 that resulted in gaining candidacy status. Since then, the College has continued its progress and expects to achieve accreditation before the deadline. With two self-studies and two visits now in the past, Ozarka's faculty, staff, and administrators feel secure in their ability to produce a useful document via a process which has led to greater self-awareness and institutional improvement.

While self-study for initial accreditation is certainly a complex and demanding task, it can be completed effectively, efficiently, and with everyone's good humor still intact. Although no one relishes committee meetings, institutions entering into candidacy can find the time invested a period of growth and improvement as they take the time to look at themselves honestly and critically. Self-Study Coordinators are responsible not only for managing the whole process but also for setting this positive tone, praising participants for their efforts, and encouraging the weary. While every coordinator will feel overwhelmed at times, the ability to walk on water or stop the sun in its tracks is truly not necessary: mere mortals can successfully complete this task if they develop a strategy to keep the campus informed and involved, select a capable steering committee, develop a reasonable timetable, and find a qualified editor.

Keeping Everyone Informed

Everyone on campus—and many off-campus constituents—needs to know that the college is planning to seek accreditation. Because support and enthusiasm for the move from the highest levels will build credibility for the decision, it is essential that the CEO be involved and visible from the beginning. All normal intramural and extramural channels of communication should be used to introduce concepts in the initial phases and then to keep everyone informed of the activities and discoveries throughout the entire process. These channels might include memos, internal newsletters, alumni bulletins, releases to the media, staff meetings, standing committee meetings, student government meetings, student newspaper, and other outlets.

Forming the Self-Study Committees

Good committee development is the key to the success of the self-study process, with selection of the steering committee at the center. It is essential that the steering committee include, at a minimum, the Self-Study

Coordinator (as its chair) and the chairs of each of the subcommittees. One error Ozarka committed in its initial self-study was simply having one member, not necessarily the chair, of each subcommittee on the steering committee, creating two barriers to smooth functioning and efficient communication between committees. First, a "high authority" position as a steering committee member might make that person something of a "threat" to the non-member subcommittee chair. Conversely, not being a subcommittee chair gave the person in that situation less "authority" on the steering committee. A valuable addition to the steering committee is a "recorder," or secretary, who is not a subcommittee chair. The chairs will have enough to do for their own groups that each will appreciate being spared responsibility for taking, transcribing, and distributing minutes.

Subcommittee chairs should be campus leaders and should include faculty, staff, and administrators. At small colleges, these people will already be very busy, but their knowledge and abilities make their leadership here vital. Even at larger institutions, the best people will be heavily engaged, but there will be a larger pool to draw from.

Subcommittee membership may be developed in various ways, including nomination by others, assignment by the president, dean, or division chair, or voluntary service. Some combination of these techniques may work best. At Ozarka, the president and Self-Study Coordinator identify specific individuals whom they ask to serve. All subcommittees then request additional volunteers. Each committee should include faculty, staff, and administrators. Students, trustees, and other community members should be invited to serve on at least some committees as well. Those who do not serve officially on a subcommittee may be asked to locate specific pieces of information for the subcommittee reports. Five to seven members on each subcommittee are sufficient, and finding a time for even that number to meet regularly can be a challenge.

The number of subcommittees needed, and thus the number of steering committee members, will vary with the size of the college and the amount of information that must be discovered or developed. For smaller institutions, one subcommittee per criterion (as another Arkansas technical college is organizing its current self-study effort) may be sufficient, but larger entities will certainly need more. For Ozarka's first effort, we had subcommittees for history and mission, governance and administration, student services, educational programs and services, financial and physical affairs, community and industrial relations, human resources, and institutional effectiveness. Our second effort reduced the number by omitting history and putting mission under institutional effectiveness, combining governance and administration with human resources, and adding community and industrial relations to educational programs and services. With increased confidence from our successful first experience, this streamlined structure worked well. All committees were asked to contribute to the new Criterion Five on ethical behavior.

No matter how the work is divided up, overlap is inevitable. Data about the library, for example, will be important to subcommittees dealing with facilities, human resources, educational purposes, and learning resources. Whether to have separate committees gather identified bits of information or to have one report on the library shared and used by more than one committee is a decision that will vary from campus to campus.

However the committee structure is set up, each must be given a written "charge" or job description. Most members will be willing workers but have no idea of what they are expected to do. One of the coordinator's first tasks, then, even before setting up the committees, is to request examples of committee job descriptions from other colleges that are further along in the accreditation process to use as models in writing the local descriptions. In developing these subcommittee "charges," the coordinator must know what he or she expects the final subcommittee reports to cover and how those reports will be used to build the final Self-Study Report.

Developing the Timetable

Again, institutional size and complexity will strongly influence development of the timetable for the self-study. At Ozarka, the compressed long-range timetable in the legislation required telescoping the self-study for initial accreditation into six months. With the PIF approved, we named committees at the end of August and set a deadline of Thanksgiving for committee reports. During December and early January, the reports were merged and edited to form the core of the final document. Some committees were asked to furnish additional information to flesh out areas needing more detail. Printing and binding occupied two weeks, and the finished documents were in the mail in February.

The second self-study spread out over a year and a half, allowing more time for committee work, more time for revision, and enough time for more thorough consideration of what we had found out and evaluation of its meaning. If at all possible, small schools should commit at least a year to self-study, while larger ones might plan on two years. Colleges with serious financial or ethical problems in their recent past may need even more time.

Producing the Final Document

After this major institutional effort, it would be foolish to produce a self-study document that was anything less than the very best in terms of grammar, usage, spelling, rhetoric, and appearance. A good self-study process should result in a valuable reference work that can be shared with current and future employees, Board members, alumni, other community members, and peer institutions. Ozarka's first self-study is still used on campus as a handy compilation of important data. As additional self-studies are written, they become part of the historical record of the college. Letting the person with the most free time be the editor or using a worn-out copy machine to print the entire document is probably not in the best interest of the school and belittles the tremendous amount of time and hard work already expended in the self-study process.

At Ozarka, the coordinator was also the final editor. Her qualifications include a master's degree plus two years additional work in English and experience teaching English composition. While degrees in English are not absolutely necessary, it is probably foolish not to involve the English faculty in at least proofreading the final draft. Whatever the editor's educational background, he or she must have strong written communication skills, preferably with a record of publication in professional journals or general readership magazines. (One caveat, however, is to beware the writer who has published only in academic fields that are heavily laden with specialized jargon.) Documents with subject-verb agreement errors, extensive use of passive verbs, and poorly organized paragraphs with inadequate supporting detail will not impress the evaluation team or anyone else accustomed to professional writing.

If the financial resources are there, production can be turned over to commercial firms. With the wide availability of desktop publishing and color printers, however, any college should be able to produce an attractive self-study document. Ozarka's initial self-study was written using WordPerfect 5.0 and the college's copy machine and binder. Only the cover and chapter dividers were professionally printed. With additional equipment now available on campus, the second one was totally locally-produced. Faculty from art or business and staff from public relations may have expertise in designing printed documents and, if so, should play a role in designing the format and any graphics needed.

Conclusion

At the beginning, completing a self-study for initial candidacy may seem like a near-impossible task. The great number of accredited institutions, however, should provide reassurance that it can be done. Planning carefully, allowing sufficient time to gather data and organize it, structuring committees thoughtfully, providing them with guidance and encouragement, keeping constituents informed all along the way, and setting high standards for the finished product will contribute to gaining a positive NCA team recommendation that can be supported by the Review Committee and finally confirmed by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education.

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From Candidacy to Accreditation: A Campus-Wide Commitment

Helen McKay Katz
Jonathan Astroth

Heartland Community College (HCC) is the newest and fastest growing community college in the state of Illinois. Established in 1990, the College first offered classes in fall 1991 with an initial enrollment of 811 students. In 1992, Heartland applied for and was granted candidacy status with the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. With a site visit scheduled for 1994, the College made the momentous decision not to apply for continued candidacy, but to apply for initial accreditation. By this time, Heartland had experienced rapid growth in enrollment (2453 in spring 1994), and a dramatic increase in full-time faculty and staff. However, in spite of this growth, it was recognized that because Heartland was such a young institution, the responsibility rested with the College to prove that it had matured and advanced to such an extent that it was worthy of accreditation.

Various factors contributed to the College's decision to seek full accreditation. First, the circumstances of Heartland's creation placed a premium on HCC attaining accreditation. From a local point of view, the College was created by State mandate over the wishes of voters who had thrice, via referenda, defeated formation of this community college district. One of the principal reasons contributing to the defeat of the formation of the college in referenda was the popular belief that the college was not needed because two universities already existed within the proposed service area of the community college. Thus, ignorance of the role of a community college engendered skepticism over the legitimacy of such an institution, placing a greater than normal value on the status of accreditation, especially since long-standing, well-regarded local universities were accredited.

Next, as a candidate institution the College had experienced a near crisis with respect to federal financial aid. In the process of the federal reauthorization of the Higher Education Act during 1993, candidate institutions were originally eliminated from eligibility to participate in federal financial aid programs. Had HCC been eliminated, it would have been a severe blow to the early development of the institution. Although candidate institutions were ultimately restored to eligibility, HCC became apprehensive about the continued ability of candidate institutions to receive federal financial aid.

Finally, and most importantly, the College viewed itself as ready to seek initial accreditation. College leadership made a judgment regarding three important points. First, they believed that since HCC had developed sufficiently overall since the time of candidacy that seeking initial accreditation was appropriate. Second, in reviewing the report of the evaluation team that recommended candidacy, leadership felt that the College had addressed the specific recommendations of that report. Third, because HCC is a member of a statewide system of public community colleges, leadership believed some general issues distinguishing candidacy from accreditation, such as permanency and long-range capabilities of the institution, could be adequately addressed.

In spite of these circumstances, College staff realized that proving Heartland satisfied all of the requirements for accreditation was going to be a major accomplishment. Three factors however, specifically suggested to College leadership that the institution was in a favorable position to achieve accreditation.

First, the College had employed highly experienced people in several key positions—faculty, administrative, and clerical. The collective experience of these employees significantly accelerated the development of a high quality institution. Coupled with experienced employees in key positions, HCC found that as a new institution it attracted people with a pioneering outlook and a willingness to commit enormous energy to the College, further supporting its rapid development.

Second, the College believed it had a capable employee among its leadership to direct the self–study process. There was complete confidence on the part of executive management that the person recruited to serve in this capacity would cause the project to be completed within the timeframe available and to the highest standards of quality. The fact that the coordinator had also directed Heartland's first self–study for candidacy served as an advantage and provided a much needed degree of experience in organizing the steering committee and self–study groups.

Finally, there was a strong commitment to the accreditation process by the Board of Trustees, executive management, and all employees as there had been to the rapid development of the College. Gaining initial accreditation was an institutional priority formally adopted by the Board of Trustees in its annual goal–setting process. The formal adoption of that goal focused the institution on its achievement and established an institutional perspective of accreditation as an overriding priority. This perspective obviated any debate about whether the College would commit whatever resources were necessary to optimize its chances of succeeding.

The priority status of accreditation was reflected in a well-documented strategy not only to educate the institution about the meaning of accreditation, but to emphasize its importance to students, faculty, and staff. The need to involve all college employees as partners in the quest for accreditation was a also considered a pivotal factor in the success of the self–study process. The following activities and events proved successful in creating a college–wide sense of understanding, cooperation, and commitment:

- NCA liaison visit and talk to HCC employees
- Inclusion of a wide cross section of employees on the Steering Committee and Self–Study Teams
- Monthly updates to the Board of Trustees
- Deliberate series of meetings to prepare faculty/staff
- Frequent updates of the self–study process to all employees through electronic and printed mail
- Creation of a networked directory that allowed all employees access to self-study documents and drafts
- Redirection of college standing committees to address key elements of the self-study process

The creation of a campus climate conducive to the effort and hard work required to complete the self–study was essential to an effective self–study process. This climate was fostered by Heartland's institutional values that have shaped the culture of the College. These twelve organizational values provide the benchmark by which many of the institution's structures and processes are measured. Four of these value statements were particularly instrumental in the accreditation process in establishing the perspective of the institution and the desired attitude of employees and trustees with respect to the accreditation process.

One value, "We prize an upbeat, can–do attitude," informed the initial, "go–ahead" decision to seek initial accreditation. Given the newness of the College and the commitment required to prepare for initial accreditation, College leaders relied on this value statement to establish among everyone a positive approach to the arduous task ahead.

A second value, "All employees are partners in the success or failure of the organization," continued the development of the proper perspective on the process. The value reminded employees that practically everyone would be called upon to contribute to the accreditation process; that there was an expectation that everyone would contribute; and that achieving or not achieving accreditation was an institutional responsibility, not simply the responsibility of those most directly involved in the process.

A third value, "Integrity is the most valued employee trait," began to deal with the individual employee's interaction with the evaluation team. In various meetings employees were not only given an idea of what to expect when the team visited, they were also told simply to be straightforward in responding to questions from team members. They were not to misrepresent the institution in any way.

A fourth value, "Individually, collectively we can always improve," addressed the perspective that employees and trustees were encouraged to adopt regarding the evaluation visit, the Team Report, and Commission action. The team was not to be regarded as a band of grand inquisitors nor the evaluation visit as an inspection. It was to be welcomed as an opportunity for expert peers to review the College and to offer validation of positive development while also making valuable suggestions for improvement. The Team Report was to be viewed as an important document in the strategic planning of the institution, not simply a report card. And, finally, Commission action was to be as the culmination of a deliberate, multi-stage process of assessing the College, irrespective of the decision. An action not to accord accreditation was to be taken not as institutional failure and collapse, but as an indication that the College had simply not come far enough and needed further improvement, as our values suggested.

Having created a climate of institution-wide commitment to the self-study process, the arrival of the team was awaited with a great sense of anticipation. Guided by the Self-Study Coordinator, the College undertook a variety of preparations immediately prior to the visit. Such preparations included disseminating biographic information about the team members to College faculty and staff, publicizing the event to students, distributing personalized lunch invitations with the Team Chair to a random sample of students, and keeping in close contact with the site Team Chair to ensure that meetings were scheduled correctly and accommodation and transportation arrangements were satisfactory.

In May 1994, the evaluation team recommended that Heartland Community College be granted initial accreditation for the maximum five year period, with the next comprehensive evaluation scheduled for 1998-99. The Review Committee concurred with this recommendation in June 1994. At its August 1994 meeting, the Commission granted Heartland accreditation.

The self-study process was a profound learning experience for faculty, staff, students, and the Board of Trustees. It represented a period of intense internal self-evaluation and institutional growth that was made possible through the dedicated partnership of the whole College community. The granting of accreditation was a major landmark in the development of this new and vibrant institution, and is a testimony to the dedication and hard work of all college constituents.

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Observations of a Focused Visit Coordinator at a Two-Year College

Stephen C. Turner

In the spring of 1994, the Milwaukee Area Technical College underwent a focused evaluation that had been required by the most recent comprehensive evaluation in 1988. Three areas arose as concerns in 1988. These were:

- communication and shared decision-making;
- performance appraisal for all employees; and
- the development of a college initiative called Systems for Success (a series of programs designed to enhance retention and achievement and move students in a timely fashion toward graduation).

To these three concerns was added a fourth, assessment of student academic achievement, by the 1989 NCA mandate on student outcomes assessment.

As a result of MATC's experiences in preparing for the 1994 visit focused on these four areas, certain conclusions may be drawn regarding preparations for focused visits in a highly unionized two-year college. These are:

- the importance of communicating with faculty and staff early and often
- the need for support from the top administration
- the need for resources
- the need for involvement of the entire college community
- the need to educate the union members and leaders about NCA purposes

1. **The importance of communicating with faculty and staff early and often.** Because of a series of changes in top administration between 1988 and 1992, MATC did not actually begin to prepare for the 1994 focused visit until rather late. In the summer of 1991, Dr. Manuel Rivera, then executive vice president, and Stephen Turner, faculty member, took the first steps in preparing for the 1994 visit. They did this by reviewing the 1988 report, gathering documents, and writing a series of status reports on the four areas of concern.

   The biggest problem at this time was simply laying hands on the documents—committee reports, memos, etc.—that would be needed to support statements made in the report. Had the college communicated with employees earlier and more often about the importance of the NCA focused visit, it could be inferred that many of these documents would have been found more easily, and memories would have been surer. Moreover, a stronger sense of creative tension, might have impelled key individuals charged with various tasks to more alacrity, zeal, and enthusiasm. As it was, once the 1988 visit was over and done with, much of the motivation generated by the NCA visit was dissipated and wasted. The conclusion, then, is that, when facing a five-year focused visit—communicate early and often with all interested parties.

2. **The need for support from top administration.** As said earlier, between 1988 and 1992, MATC underwent a series of changes in top administration. This created some problems for those involved in preparing the college for the visit because it resulted in weak support from top administration—at times. When MATC's current president, John Birkholz, came on board, he was vitally and immediately interested in the NCA visit. However, before Dr. Birkholz's arrival, there were some questions about top administration's commitment to preparing for the NCA visit. Without such support, progress is difficult because cooperation—not just from the president's office but across the board—is often hard to come by. (If employees feel the president does not think the visit is important, they are not apt to think it is important.) And without cooperation across the college, an institution cannot prepare for an NCA visit of any sort. The Focused Visit Coordinator has to gather so much material from so many different sources that if cooperation levels are not high, delays will invariably occur, delays that can compound and make the writing of the report extremely difficult.

3. **The need for resources.** This point should be obvious but it cannot be stressed enough. Resources—including clerical help, computers, printers, travel money for NCA meetings—are required. A college simply cannot expect a coordinator to do a good job if the college does not support the coordinator with the necessary resources.

4. **The need for involvement of the entire college community.** If the entire college community is not involved in preparing for the visit, a college cannot expect community members to be able to respond cogently to the NCA evaluation team during the visit. MATC is a large college—1400 part-time faculty members, 750 full-time faculty members, and almost double that number of other employees. When NCA consultant-evaluators are on campus they ask questions, many questions. Their purpose is to confirm or deny the statements made in the report. If members of the college community are uninformed on the issues, the college's credibility suffers. The only way for the college to speak to the evaluation team with one voice is to involve the entire college community in preparations and keep them informed throughout the preparation process.

5. **The need to educate the union members and leaders about NCA purposes.** The temptation for union leaders is to view the NCA visit as a bargaining or negotiating opportunity. No blame should attach here to anyone; it is simply the way unions tend to work. However, the purposes of accreditation visits—especially focused visits—are not to reward or to punish affiliated institutions, but to check on their progress and to help them continue to improve. According to the NCA *Manual for the Evaluation Visit*, the "focused evaluation team is not charged with evaluating whether an institution fulfills the Criteria for Accreditation; nor is it empowered to recommend that candidacy or accreditation be granted, continued, or denied. It can recommend probation if circumstances warrant. "Its basic role is to evaluate the areas specified as the focus of the visit and to provide the Commission with a progress report on developments at the institution since the last comprehensive visit."

At MATC, there were some who misunderstood the basic role of the focused visit team and wanted to bring all sorts of things to the attention of the team. The team members listened, of course, to anyone who had anything to say, but they never forgot their basic role was to "evaluate the areas specified." Much energy was wasted, and many tempers frayed because of a fundamental misunderstanding.

In conclusion, MATC learned from its last focused evaluation visit that colleges preparing for such a visit should start early, should communicate often with faculty and staff, should assure support from top administration, should assure necessary resources for the coordinator, should involve the entire community, and should educate the union members and leaders about NCA purposes.

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Using A Focused Visit To Its Best Advantage

Terrence Glenn
Catherine M. Rahmes

In July 1994 the NCA conducted a focused evaluation of Cincinnati Technical College, the result of the Commission's 1991 action, which continued the College's accreditation and scheduled the next comprehensive visit in ten years but required a focused evaluation in 1994-95. The reason for the visit was to evaluate the degree of success of the administrative structure and governance model of the College. In addition, the evaluation team was requested to review the College's Preliminary Assessment Plan and also the College's request for institutional change in status from a technical college to a comprehensive community college, which involved the addition of the Associate of Arts and the Associate of Science degrees.

Rationale for Multi-Purpose Visit

When the team members conducted the comprehensive evaluation in February 1991, they found a college in transition. The new president had been in office only a little over a year. During that period of time, the first collective bargaining agreement between the College and the faculty had been reached, although it had not been fully implemented.

The multi-purpose visit was a result of the expanded requirements of the Commission and the desire of the institution to broaden its mission. First and foremost, the College was required to report on the progress that had been made on the area of focus, namely the degree of success of the administrative structure and the governance model. The second purpose was again a requirement and that was to present the College's assessment plan. The final purpose of the visit was a desire of the College to add the degrees of Associate of Arts and Associate of Science.

The College was advised by its liaison officer that a change of this type would require a team visit. During the 1994 NCA Annual Meeting, the staff liaison, Stephen Spangehl, and the Self-Study Coordinator sat down and discussed a strategy that would address all three purposes. Dr. Spangehl proposed moving the scheduled focused visit forward from February 1995 to the summer of 1994. By moving the dates forward, the College would be allowed to begin to offer the new degrees in the fall of 1994 as planned. Dr. Spangehl offered his assistance in rescheduling the visit and his assurance that he could assemble a team of consultant-evaluators who could help accomplish all three facets of the visit. It was through the cooperation of the Commission, the team members, and the College, that Cincinnati State Technical and Community College was able to use its focused evaluation visit to its best advantage and accomplish all three purposes.

Organization of the Steering Committee

The focused evaluation report required by the Commission was prepared with the participation and support of the College's Long-Range Planning Committee. The Long-Range Planning Committee is a twelve-member committee that includes a trustee, the College president, other representatives of the administration, the Faculty Senate president, the president of the local chapter of the AAUP, the representatives of the contractual and hourly staff, and a person representing student interests. It acted as the steering committee for the report preparation and for the team visit arrangements.

Prior to its role in the focused visit preparation, the Long-Range Planning Committee had produced three planning documents. It published the College's long-range plan which was entitled *The Plan for 1993-98*. It had also provided the leadership role in preparing the documents required by the Ohio Board of Regents for the conversion to a community college status, namely *A Proposal for Change of Status of Cincinnati Technical College* and *The Operating Plan for the Cincinnati State Technical And Community College*. The *Operating Plan* provided the foundation of the request for institutional change required by the Commission. The Assessment Plan was prepared by a task force appointed by the Long-Range Planning Committee.

Approach to Focused Evaluation

The approach used by the College was to gain broad involvement in the review process by relying on the Long-Range Planning Committee members to inform and involve their constituents. The chairman of the Long-Range Planning Committee defined the committee role as follows. The committee would review the drafts of the focused evaluation report as prepared by the chairman. The drafts would include wherever possible elements from existing documents, especially those that had been prepared for conversion to the community college. The committee members would circulate the drafts to their constituents and provide feedback based upon the reactions they received. They would approve the final version of the report. They would establish whatever subcommittees needed to make the necessary arrangements for the visit. They would help set up the Resource Room and collect the minutes of the various standing committees. They would also suggest and provide other supportive materials. They would meet collectively with the visitors and on an individual basis as appropriate.

Responses To The Team's Concerns and Recommendations

The evaluation team that conducted the last comprehensive review for continued accreditation listed three concerns.

- **Concern Number 1: The administrative structure and governance model recently instituted in an attempt to resolve ongoing problems related to these areas, while holding promise, is yet untested by time or significant events.**

  Progress: The "advise and consent" process has worked effectively at Cincinnati Technical College through faculty, staff, and student involvement in the committee system. Some examples are:

  — *Academic Policies and Curriculum Committee*. The Committee annually reviews all program curricula for sequencing of courses, prerequisites, lecture/lab hour ratios, credit hour require ments, and course descriptions.

  — *Smoking Policy*. Working with employee and student groups, the administration recommended the Board adopt a policy that has worked well ever since.

  — *Annual Budget Development*. During his first year in office, President Long required that the Budget Advisory Committee do an exhaustive study of all requests for funds in the spirit of zero-based budgeting. This review resulted in a process for distributing resources fairly.

  — *Facilities Planning Committee*. This committee annually makes recommendations in such potentially divisive areas as which programs get capital equipment money from setaside funds, which units get additional space, and which units get higher priorities for requests for State capital dollars.

  — *Faculty/Administration Communication Team (FACT)*. Early in its existence, the FACT was charged with resolving two grievances involving basic tenets of the negotiated contract, specifically workload and overload pay. The committee resolved the issues and recommended changes to the contract that was approved by the association membership and the College's Board of Trustees. Additional issues discussed and resolved included the individual contracts for members of the bargaining unit and academic advising concerns.

— *Conversion to Community College.* The best example of cooperation was the process to decide whether or not to convert to a community college. The Board involved all constituencies in the two-yearlong discussion before reaching its decision in favor of the conversion.

- **Concern Number 2: The general institutional planning, evaluation, goal setting, goal prioritizing, and budget development processes do not represent a coordinated, integrated effort.**

  Progress: The president established the Long-Range Planning Committee in March 1991. The Long-Range Planning Committee accepted the charge of producing a five-year plan and designed a process that would provide for broad-based input into the development of the goals of the institution. Its two-year long development process also allowed time for feedback and refinement opportunities. In February 1993, the committee issued *The Plan for 1993-98*. Annual goal setting is integrated into the budget-building process and the performance evaluation process.

- **Concern Number 3: Facility allocations for the student services are inadequate and are not nearly on the par with those allocated for the educational programs.**

  Progress: Capital improvements have been made to the student services areas of the College. A comparison of the various offices and their square footages in 1990 versus 1994 shows that the alloted space increased more than 60 percent from 5,060 square feet to 8,680 square feet. In addition to the remodeled and expanded areas, the student services offices have been provided with new furniture, equipment, and an integrated computer system. Investment in renovations and equipment was nearly $2 million. The College also has these general use areas available for student activities and athletics: gym, pool, game room, weight room, and television room. The space devoted to these activities is 28,016 square feet.

Request for Institutional Change

Over the past five years, the state of Ohio has been encouraging technical colleges to become community colleges in order to provide more affordable access to higher education in the state. Since this initiative was not mandated, some technical colleges have chosen to remain technical only, while others have expanded their missions. The decision whether to make an institutional change was especially difficult for Cincinnati Technical College for several reasons: (1) the Cincinnati area has a number of colleges and universities that provide access to higher education; (2) the College has enjoyed a strong reputation as a technical college and therefore has fulfilled a special "niche" in higher education in Cincinnati; (3) the cooperative education component of the technical degrees has made many of the College's programs unique in the state; (4) because the College is a close-knit institution, it was imperative that the College community support the change of mission.

Because of these concerns, the College undertook a study to determine the viability of this change in mission. The study included examining both internal and external factors in a variety of methods including public hearings, surveys, feasibility studies, and budget analyses. Although the process took close to two years, the final decision to request an institutional change was better publicized and accepted than it might have been had a decision been made more quickly.

The Relationship of the Proposed Change to the Last Visit

The addition of two new associate's degrees will capitalize on strengths and address two of the concerns of the last comprehensive evaluation team. The first strength listed was the educational programs. These new degrees were developed using the same processes as those used for the College's other degree programs. The second strength was the cooperative education component of the curricula. The new degrees will incorporate cooperative education experiences as an integral part of the programs. Few transfer programs contain the work experience levels that are included in the proposed new degrees. The third strength listed was the breadth of the instructional equipment. The planning process that was used in developing the new degrees has included the identification of the laboratory equipment necessary to operate the programs, and the costs to purchase the equipment were included in the estimates of expenditures. The fourth strength identified by the team was the sound financial condition of the College. The financial planning that has been used to balance the College's annual budget has been incorporated in the planning for the new degrees. The fifth and final strength listed was the dedication of all of the components of the College to the quality of the educational programs. The same dedication as was found previously has been exhibited in the development of the new degrees. Also, the areas the team members identified for improvement included increased access, transferability of credits, and assessment. The new programs addressed the first two concerns and the assessment plan was validated by the team.

The College's Ability to Continue to Meet the Criteria for Accreditation

The Board of Trustees thoroughly studied the anticipated effects of the change of status from a technical college to a community college during its two-year review of the issue. To summarize the significant amount of data that had been accumulated during the study, the Board hired a consultant. The consultant identified eight major factors that would be affected by this change:

- assessment of student need;
- impact of Board of Regents/Ohio Law;
- impact on curriculum and faculty;
- impact on co-op program;
- impact on college name and image;
- impact on Board of Trustees;
- impact on other area colleges and universities; and
- impact on budget and enrollment.

A careful analysis of these factors convinced the Board and the College community that the conversion was feasible. The NCA accreditation factors affected have been planned for and build on the success of the technical programs. The most notable change in requirements for accreditation is that the institution include documentation of students' academic achievement. The newly-formed Assessment Task Force will ensure this criterion is met, both for the technical and the transfer programs.

The Team Visit

The team visit was scheduled for two days with a three-member team. Arrangements for the team visit were coordinated by the chair of the evaluation team with the local assistance of the Self-Study Coordinator. The chair developed a schedule composed of individual and group meetings. When the team members arrived on campus, they met first with the president of the College. Then there were three open sessions scheduled. Each was devoted to a separate area: governance and administration, assessment, and institutional change. Notices of the open sessions were distributed to the College with special invitations being offered to appropriate groups and individuals. Each member of the team was responsible for one of the three areas. A luncheon meeting was held with members of the Long-Range Planning Committee and members of the College's Board of Trustees. While no formal agenda was followed, the team members took the opportunity to ask questions about their respective areas of responsibility.

There were also individual meetings both scheduled and unscheduled. Team members scheduled meetings with officers of the College in whose area of responsibility they were interested. They also met with leaders of the Faculty Senate and with the faculty union president. The members made themselves available for drop-in visits in the Resource Room, and a number of discussions did take place.

The focused visit was concluded on the second day in an exit interview. At the exit interview, the chair reported on the findings of the team. The results were very positive. The team concluded that progress had been made in the area of governance and administration, although there were still some challenges ahead. The assessment plan was approved. Some very helpful suggestions to improve the plan were offered. The request for institutional change was approved. The team found that the College had the resources to make and sustain the change in mission. The team concluded that the College could continue to meet the criteria for accreditation with the Commission. No reports were required nor further visits until the next comprehensive visit in 2000-01. The Commission voted to approve the change of status at its meeting November 2-5, 1994.

A number of items still lie ahead for the College. The College needs to revise its Assessment Plan to incorporate the suggestions of the evaluation team. It also needs to implement the Assessment Plan over the next three years. A schedule for implementation was included in the Plan. Finally, the College needs to monitor its performance in preparation for the next comprehensive visit in 2000-01.

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Chapter V

Focus On Criterion One

Restructuring Higher Education: Its Impact On Accreditation and Quality

Terrence J. MacTaggart

Introduction

Mergers, acquisitions, and other examples of restructuring are becoming increasingly common in higher education. In recent years, for example, North Dakota has centralized its colleges and universities under one strong system while also creating a single presidency for two distant campus. Minnesota is on the verge of a statewide consolidation that will combine three systems into one and lead to the merger of a number of technical and community colleges. Similarly, massive reorganizations have occurred in Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Alaska. Given the fiscal pressures facing most states and the continuing passion for "reinventing" public institutions, it is likely that these kinds of structural changes will become even more prevalent in the years ahead.

This short paper will:

- outline the new expectations of the public and their political representatives;
- illustrate the variety of changes that fall under the heading of restructuring;
- point out the questions which restructuring raises with respect to accreditation and academic quality; and
- suggest likely future trends.[1]

Great Expectations

In a perceptive essay on the condition of American higher education, Clark Kerr describes the foreseeable future as a "time of trouble" characterized by a new assertiveness on the part of the public and the politicians.[2] The new public expectations, usually at odds with establishment preferences within higher education, include:

- improvements in productivity with special scrutiny of faculty workloads, sabbaticals, and the utility of research;
- greater accessibility as determined by low cost tuition, ease of transfer of credit among differing kinds of institutions (e.g., from technical institutes to traditional liberal arts programs), time to degree completion, and the availability of high demand courses;
- alternatives to traditional campus and class-based delivery systems, such as courses by interactive television and computer;

- reduced cost of operation consistent with reduced operating overhead and unit costs that have been achieved in the for-profit sector;
- greater willingness to "reinvent" patterns of organization, academic policies, and processes in order to serve students better at a lower cost.

These expectations run counter to the dominant academic culture that since at least World War II has become accustomed to a fairly steady expansion of resources, mission, and independence. Successful efforts to reinvent the way the academy does business either by implementing one of the total quality doctrines or reversing the academic ratchet[3] remain the exception. Faculty and staff unions, advocates for specific programs, and administrative reward systems that favor acquiescence to the faculty rather than through confrontation all contribute to massive resistance to change.

Examples of Restructuring

Governors in particular, and some legislators, have grown impatient with this genial, and sometimes not so genial, intransigence. In a dozen or more states they are asserting their authority in restructuring public higher education. The same economic pressures that impel elected officials to insist on change are leading to mergers and acquisitions among private colleges and universities as well.[4]

Illustrations of the changes brought about by the restructuring movement include:

- dissolution of three governing boards and the creation of a new one to oversee more than sixty campuses including technical colleges, community colleges, and comprehensive universities;
- the shift in authority from eleven more or less separate two-year, four-year, and research institutions reporting to one board to a half dozen institutions reporting to a single executive;
- the dissolution of a strong, central coordinating board in favor of institutional boards and a presidents' council;
- the merger of an unaccredited technical college with a branch campus of an accredited community college;
- legislative initiatives to pull individual programs from three separate institutions (under three separate boards) to serve a growing population center;
- private and proprietary organizations developing "systems" of institutions under varying levels of central control;
- central office "takeover" of financial and academic control of two-year institutions from the local board.

Impact on Accreditation and Quality

Regional accreditation has been based fundamentally on the idea of a single, coherent, palpable *institution*. The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association adamantly insists that its teams evaluate the entire institution, unlike professional accrediting bodies, which focus on particular programs such as business administration or nursing. The *institutional* requirements and the criteria take for granted conventional patterns of organization and decision making. They assume an entity to be evaluated with one board that sets policy, one executive with authority to carry out policy, a unified educational mission, a consistent set of goals, a faculty that oversees the academic program and participates in governance through a senate or bargaining unit and a student body that is affiliated primarily with that one college or university. Restructuring often destroys this concept of the institution by displacing its leaders, erasing its boundaries, diluting its faculty, desegregating its student body and redefining its mission and goals. This leaves accreditors hearing too few or too many respondents to the question, "Who's in charge?"

While restructuring leaves accrediting agencies perplexed, it also raises a number of questions regarding quality in general:

- What are the consequences, for example, of merging an unaccredited vocational or technical school with an accredited community college or state university?
- How is shared governance defined when two or more unions, each with a separate contract, represent faculty at a single, consolidated institution?
- Overall, are the energy, the resources, and the time it takes to restructure worth the possible pay off in better service to students?
- Do students really benefit when radically different kinds of institutions are co-mingled under one board?
- Is accountability enhanced through increased centralization or is the public better served by more autonomous colleges and universities?

Future Trends

Although corporate America currently relishes the advantages of decentralizing authority, it appears that public higher education and, to a lesser extent, private higher education will continue to witness an increasingly centralized locus of power. The pressures to bargain collectively, to focus accountability on one executive rather than many, to reduce duplication[5] and, on the private side, to achieve a scale of economies while reaching new markets, support what Robert Michels described as "the iron law of oligarchy."

Specifically, we should expect to see:

- continued aggregation of authority in central governing boards or in new powers granted to coordinating boards
- occasional exceptions to this pattern in which central boards are disbanded in favor of institutional control
- continued merging of institutions in both the public and private sectors
- acquisition of non-accredited, for-profit educational enterprises by private, accredited institutions
- slowdown in the acquisition of accredited institutions in the U.S. by entrepreneurs from the Pacific Rim and elsewhere
- geographic expansion of proprietary institutions offering baccalaureate and graduate programs
- rapid development of "virtual universities" offering degrees through the electronic media

Notes

1. The material from this article is drawn from MacTaggart, T., ed., *Restructuring Higher Education: What Works and What Doesn't*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, to be published Fall, 1995.

2. Kerr, C. 1994. "Foreward: American Society Turns More Assertive: A New Century Approaches for Higher Education in the United States," in Altbach, P.G. and others, eds., *Higher Education in American Society*, Third Edition, pp. 9–14, Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books.

3. For a discussion of internal restructuring, see PEW Higher Education Research Program, "The End of Sanctuary," *Policy Perspectives* (1991) 3, 4A and other publications of the PEW Higher Education Research Program.

4. Martin, J. and Samels, J. 1994. *Merging Colleges for Mutual Growth: A New Strategy for Academic Managers*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins.

5. McGuinness, A. 1994. "The States and Higher Education" in Altbach, P.G. and others, eds., *Higher Education in American Society*, Third Edition, pp. 155–180 Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books.

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Chapter VI

Focus on Criterion Three: General Education

General Education Assessment Strategies at Madonna University: Ensuring Faculty Ownership/ Securing Faculty Trust

Paul M. Stemmer, Jr.
Ernest I. Nolan

For colleges and universities developing and implementing an institutional plan for assessment of student academic achievement, the most daunting aspect is engaging faculty members in general education assessment. We have all heard the knee-jerk responses from our colleagues: "It's impossible to measure what really matters." "We don't have the time or money." "Our students will never cooperate." "Our colleagues will never cooperate." "We don't want to teach to a test." The list of excuses goes on indefinitely.

General education lies in a gray area of faculty responsibility. Its goals and objectives are determined collaboratively, through a process of compromise and consensus. Tied directly to the institutional mission statement, the aims of general education are often articulated in high blown language, often inspirational in tone. Measuring these statements can be an assessment nightmare because, inherently, they are difficult, if not impossible, to measure adequately due to their masterful imprecision. The initial phase of the assessment process—reviewing the institutional mission and goals—strikes faculty members as relatively easy compared to identifying meaningful assessment strategies. Faculty members—especially faculty members working in groups—tend to retreat from the latter process. They want someone in authority to tell them what to do and they will get back to what they feel they do best—critique the process and return to teaching and scholarship.

At Madonna University, a conceptual framework of assessment was instrumental in helping to build trust and secure cooperation of the faculty for discussion of general education assessment. Because of the complexity of assessing the range of general education goals and competencies, a multiple and incremental study approach was developed. The Madonna University model involves a three-year developmental phase, during which the faculty will develop or adopt, pilot test, and evaluate four options for assessing student academic achievement in general education. At the end of this period, one option or a combination of options will be adopted for use across the university.

Giving the faculty flexibility and passing on ownership of the process helps to ensure hands-on faculty involvement in determining appropriate assessment strategies. The outcomes and changes that ensue from this out-in-the-open decision-making process belong to the faculty, which means that they must invest themselves in the success of general education assessment to the extent they invest themselves in the success of their disciplinary programs and majors.

Our goal for the assessment process at Madonna University is to build a culture for assessment equal in rigor and depth to the curriculum development process. This new culture of assessment for improvement is being based on three over-riding concepts:

- system-wide thinking;
- using assessment results as evidence to monitor and foster continuous improvement;
- involving the entire university community—faculty and staff—in the assessment and improvement process.

Trust accrues from the fact that assessment data are never to be used punitively but as a basis for shared responsibility for improvement.

Assessment Philosophy

A formally stated assessment philosophy creates the ground rules for establishing a sense of trust. It serves as a guidepost for faculty and administration to focus questions and allay concerns. The Assessment Committee of Madonna University has set up the following principles to serve as guidelines for the assessment plan:

- The goal of any assessment should be to provide feedback on student performance that the University community can readily interpret so that members can better understand and use the results to improve teaching and learning (adapted from Rogers, 1988).
- Assessment is a systematic process for setting goals, gathering information, interpreting it, and using the results about student learning for purposes of improvement (adapted from Hutchings, P. and T. Marchese, 1990).
- Assessment is an inclusive, cooperative effort involving the entire University community.
- Assessment instruments should be designed in such a manner as to facilitate changes suggested by the results.
- The climate for all assessment programs should encourage the University community to work together toward specified goals in a climate of inclusion, openness, and trust.
- All assessment activities will be conducted in accordance with standards for assessment practices and the use of results (*Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, 1985*, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, PL 101-336).

The Mission and Goals

The mission statement played in central role in developing the assessment plan (see Figure 1, Conceptual Framework). Each college and department reviewed the mission, developed its own mission statement that would complement and operationalize the university's mission. Then the Assessment Committee reviewed the goals and competency statements for general education. Required general education courses have been historically aligned with these goals, and assessment strategies were developed around them.

The Academic Goals of Madonna University

- **General Education Goals (1-6)**
  - **Goal 1: Communication.** Develop effective communication skills.
  - **Goal 2: Religious Values.** Achieve an understanding of religious and moral dimensions of human experience.

  - **Goal 3: Cultural Traditions.** Develop an understanding of and responsiveness to the aesthetic, emotive, and intellectual expressions of human concerns through the Humanities and Arts.
  - **Goal 4: Scientific Inquiry.** Achieve an understanding of modern concepts of science, computer technology, and mathematics, and the relationship between scientific and technological realities in contemporary life.
  - **Goal 5: Personal and Social Environment.** Develop an understanding of the ways in which individuals perceive, experience, and behave in their personal and social environment.
  - **Goal 6: World Citizenship.** Develop a facility for international and national citizenship skills.

- **Academic Program/Major and Career Goals (7-8)**
  - **Goal 7: Personal and Professional Development.** Achieve individual educational goals for personal enrichment and/or career development.
  - **Goal 8: Significant Content Knowledge.** Master a significant body of content knowledge.

Conceptual Framework

The potential number of assessment opportunities exceeds the ability to create a concise and manageable understanding of the core outcomes. Many more outcomes are continuously measured and monitored than can be reported or managed in a common plan. The conceptual framework provided a means to focus attention directly on those outcomes most critical to the mission. In some cases, the assessment data existed; in other cases, new more collaborative sources of assessment data are required.

The conceptual framework, represented by Appendix 1, Figure One, shows the sequential and cumulative nature of a student's educational experiences. The planning process begins by focusing on the system of admitting or intake of students. The end of the process focuses on how well Madonna University students have succeed in careers and other post-graduation activities such as life-long learning and graduate school. The academic goals, course activities, and Student Life and Support Services, all contribute to accomplishing the University mission.

The structure of the Madonna Assessment Plan takes into account the most important aspects of a student's academic career:

1. Entry Level
2. Mid-Level
3. Graduation - General education Goals
4. Graduation - Undergraduate and Graduate Program Major Goals
5. Alumni (associate, bachelor, and graduate)

All of the non-university environmental factors impinge on the ability of the students to accomplish their educational and career outcomes; however, the University has no control over this environment.

The assessment plan focuses on the student achievement of the Academic Goals. All other variables are considered institutional variables that support this outcome. These institutional variables are important but separate from the assessment plan and are included in the University's self-studies.

Assessment Plans and Mission Linkage

The goals of the General education Goal Assessment are to:

- assess student academic achievement of general education outcomes;
- evaluate the effectiveness of the University's general education program;
- determine the level of satisfaction of students, faculty, and external community regarding the University's general education program;
- determine areas where program modifications of teaching can be made to improve learning outcomes of the general education of Madonna University students.

The assessment plan for General education calls for analysis of mid-level writing, and for outcome assessment at or near graduation. The system for assessing general education goals is composed of the following:

- Method A. A GPA indicator system of selected general education courses.
- Method B. A research and development project for course embedded direct assessment of general Education outcomes.
- Method C. Adaptations to existing alumni surveys to include assessment of general education outcomes.

A study team is developing recommendations for one or a combination of four alternatives: 1) an integrated take home essay covering most of the general education skills, 2) an in-class short essay similar to option 1, 3) the ACT COMP, 4) assessment of a General Education Portfolio. Each of these four options will in a sense be competing; the faculty involved in the development of an option are charged with trying to make their option the best alternative. Departments will be required to assess general education goal attainment using one of the four options. Within three years a system will be developed that will yield comparable data on general education skills across disciplines and assessment methods. The third indicator system will modify or create new alumni and senior surveys with questions directed at general education goal attainment.

The three indicator systems will yield profiles of student achievement of general education outcomes: one on the achievement of seniors using GPA indicators; one on the results of a direct measure (the four options); and one on alumni. A report with recommendations will be developed and discussed at a Full Faculty Business Meeting, as well as at department meetings. Discussions will focus on strengths and weaknesses, and on what changes can be made to improve attainment of student achievement goals.

During the next three years, departments have been asked to implement one of the four options. At the end of this development period a faculty and student evaluation will recommend one option or a combination of options will be put in place. Plans for communicating the findings and evaluating the assessment were developed.

Method B assessment activities (direct measures) will take place during the senior year and may be part of capstone courses (senior seminars) that are required of all program majors. Since multiple methods will be employed, some areas (capstone courses) may use combinations of third party tests and course embedded assessment and portfolio approaches.

Mid Level Assessment. The University initiated a Writing Across the Curriculum program more than 11 years ago. The concerns and benefits of focusing on writing as a means of developing literacy, a tool for learning, and an expression of critical thinking continues to be of interest to faculty. It was decided that the mid-level assessment of general education skills would focus on assessment of writing skills and would complement the existing Writing Across the Curriculum program. The assessment techniques will primarily use course embedded portfolio approaches. Students in these courses will be required to keep a writing portfolio. This portfolio will

Madonna University

INTAKE

H.S. Preparation
  Diploma/Transcripts
  GPA/GED
  ACT
  Advanced Placement

MU Placement Tests

  T.A.S.K
    English
    Reading
    Math
  TOEFL
  TWE
  CLEP
  MELAB

Financial
  Financial Aid App.
  FAF

University Environment

The Mission of Madonna University

The Mission of Madonna University is to instill in its students Christian humanistic values, intellectual inquiry, and a commitment to serving others through a liberal arts education, integrated with career preparation and based on the truths and principles recognized within a Catholic tradition.

Goals

• Communication • Religious Values • Cultural Traditions
• Scientific Inquiry • Personal and Social Environment • World Citizenship
• Personal and Professional Development • Significant Content Knowledge

Courses

General Education Course Requirements - Elected Courses

Student Life and Support Services

Admissions - student clubs/organizations - student honor societies - Student Government - student representation on University committees - Madonna Academic Performance Program (MAPP) - Library Services - Instructional Center - Center for Personalized Instruction - Educational Support Services - Retention Program - Drug Abuse Prevention Program - Co-operative Placement - Internships - Supervised Field Experiences

Focused Support Services

Computerized Writing Laboratory (Communication) • Campus Ministry (Religious Values) • Cultural Affairs (Cultural Traditions) • Scientific Inquiry (Academic Computer Lab) • Multicultural Affairs (Personal and Social Environment) •Center for International Studies (World Citizenship) • Personal and Professional Development (Career Resource Center)

Non-university Environment

Individual

Health, Spirituality, Study Skills, Course Load, Finances

Family

Moral Support, Financial Support, Child Care

GRADUATION

College Preparation
  Diploma/Transcripts
  GPA

Job Performance

Alumni Feedback
  Survey
  Informal

Credential Tests
  MDE Test for
    Teacher Certification
  Nurse Licensing
    Exam (NCLEX)

GRE
  Other graduate tests

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

be assessed by a group of faculty trained in a specifically developed portfolio assessment model. Results will be aggregated and a profile will be generated. A report by the Writing Across the Curriculum Committee will be included in its newsletter that is distributed to all faculty and staff, and is available to students.

Faculty Scope and Participation

- **Faculty Participation.** The University has sponsored regional conferences on assessment and has invited all faculty to attend. A total of approximately 40 faculty and staff are on various subcommittees dealing with assessment issues and creating the assessment plans for entry-level, mid-level, and graduation outcomes (program and general education). All the faculty members are involved in the program major goal and assessment development through their departments. The assessment plan was approved by the faculty at a Faculty Business Meeting.

- **Institution–wide conceptualization.** The plan has been discussed at faculty–wide business meetings over the past three academic years 1991-94. Cross-disciplinary faculty committees have worked on the assessment plan. Designs for the reporting of results (where appropriate) have been, and will continue to be developed at faculty–wide business meetings. Other reports will be built into the agenda for the department chair meetings. Department chair meetings will also develop plans for disseminating results at Faculty Department meetings.

Assessment Awareness and Training

A faculty handbook for assessment practices is being prepared. While many department chairs are maintaining their own sets of resources specific to their programs, the Center for Research and the Library are creating a reserve collection of resources for faculty support. These resources include current books on assessment methods and issues and selected publications from the Center for Higher Education Assessment at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Training on writing portfolios has already begun. Other training will be developed during the Fall of 1994. The training will build on the methods discussed in the Assessment Handbook.

Institutional Improvement

The primary goal of the assessment of general education is to gain a better understanding of student achievement that will facilitate continuous improvement of teaching and learning. Faculty development and ownership is viewed as necessary, is encouraged and designed into the process, and is intended to foster open dialogue about assessment of the attainment of these general education and program goals. Each aspect of the plan calls for systematic analysis and review of the data in all meetings that discuss improvement. The Academic Vice President and the Academic Council (composed of college deans) will lead discussions regarding improvement plans based on the results of the student achievement profiles and recommendations for improvement.

Observations and Future Directions

The Assessment Committee is currently committed to asking the right questions, yet acknowledging that it will not have all the right answers. At the end of the three-year developmental phase, information will be available across the institution about student, faculty, and community perceptions of achievement in general education. The task will be to determine which of this information is most useful to advance the process of continuous improvement. Faculty members know that the changes that will be made in the assessment process and in the programs that are being assessed will contribute to the development of the University as a whole and to the professional growth of faculty members as teachers and curriculum and *assessment* leaders. At the heart of this process is faculty trust, from which, if conditions are right, will emerge strong faculty commitment to manifesting a climate of improvement across the institution based in part, on the results of assessment information.

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Assessing Student Achievement of General Education Outcomes

Patricia Murphy

In assessing general education outcomes, many institutions are learning that nationally normed, standardized tests are not particularly useful for assessing general education outcomes. As one example of an alternative, a case study is presented here of a land grant institution's assessment of general education outcomes. The case study includes description of the development of the instrument, the pilot test using 10 courses (26 sections), 25 instructors with over 1,000 students, and the results from the fall semester 1994.

The General Education Program

To set the assessment in a context, the characteristics of the general education program are briefly described. The recently implemented general education program has three interrelated components: seven expected student outcome statements, 36 credits across six distribution categories, and four required courses.

- The seven outcomes are:
    - Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats.
    - Locate and use information for making appropriate personal and professional decisions.
    - Comprehend the concepts and perspectives needed to function in national and international societies.
    - Comprehend intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics.
    - Comprehend concepts and methods of inquiry in science and technology, and their applications for society.
    - Integrate knowledge and ideas in a coherent and meaningful manner.
    - Comprehend the need for lifelong learning.

- The six distribution categories and the credits required are:
    - Communication - 9 credits
    - Quantitative Reasoning - 3 credits
    - Science and Technology - 10 credits
    - Humanities and Fine Arts - 6 credits
    - Social and Behavioral Sciences - 6 credits
    - Wellness - 2 credits

- The four common required courses are:
    - English 110, 111 - 6 credits (writing)
    - Speech 110 - 3 credits
    - Mathematics 124 - 3 credits (finite mathematics)

After formal approval of the seven outcomes, courses were proposed by departments to address the outcomes.

The University Senate General Education Committee received materials and recommended approval of courses to meet the outcomes. In the materials submitted, departments stated which of the intended outcomes the course would address and in which distribution area the course belonged. For example, a course from the Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Department was proposed for the Wellness category. A course from the Child Development and Family Science Department was proposed for the Social and Behavioral Sciences category. A course could be proposed to meet any two or more of the outcomes. The Committee provided a template illustrating what was required in the materials including description of what and how the course activities relate to the specified outcomes and how the achievement of the outcomes would be assessed. The template became the criteria the Committee used in approving courses.

The campus culture does not favor standardized tests but does value autonomy of units, faculty, and courses. Thus, the plan for assessing the outcomes in general education had to address the outcomes as well as provide for individuality and flexibility.

The Senate General Education Committee is responsible for assessing student learning in relation to the general education outcomes. Given the number of students involved (approximately 1800 new freshmen annually), the number of courses approved for general education (presently at 78 and increasing), and the number of faculty involved in teaching (there are 84 sections of the composition course alone in the fall semester), it was very clear that a simple plan with a simple instrument that was machine scorable was essential. To be acceptable to the faculty it also had to be adaptable to the particular course, not "one instrument for all."

Assessing the Outcomes

The instrument developed is machine scorable with items for each of the seven outcomes, rated using a five-point Likert scale. The form is tailored to the outcomes specified by the department to be addressed in the course. For example, the composition course claims to address outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7, while the math course proposes to address outcomes 1, 2, and 5. The current approved general education courses have 32 different patterns of outcomes. So there are 32 different versions of the instrument reflecting the 32 patterns of outcomes. The items ask students to report their opinions of how the courses are affecting them in relation to the outcomes. While we acknowledge that the instrument is not a direct measure of student academic learning, it does provide one kind of evidence, that is, students' perceptions of what they think they are learning. The review of the research prepared by Peter Ewell in the NCHEMS document (1994) does add credence to the use of student opinions and perceptions as an indirect measure of achievement.

Faculty and students from 10 courses were part of a pilot project fall semester. The purposes of the pilot project were to assess (1) the usefulness of the items in providing evidence of learner achievement of the outcomes and (2) the usefulness of the information to the instructors of the courses. The 10 courses were selected to represent the following characteristics: populated primarily by freshmen, specifically identified as required (English 110, English 111, Speech 110, Math 124), at least two for each of the seven outcomes, class size of at least 20 (approximately), at least one from each college that has general education approved courses, and at least one from each of the general education categories. The courses selected were general chemistry, world food crops, introduction to literature, acting, lifetime fitness, university chorus, introductory sociology, and three of the four required courses (composition, speech, mathematics). For courses with many sections, such as English 110, Speech 110, and Math 124, five or six sections were selected to provide student numbers of at least 100 enrolled.

In the 10 courses, there were eight outcome patterns:

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1 2 3 4 6 (two courses)
1 2 3 4 6 7 (two courses)
1 2 5
1 3 4 6
1 4 6 7
2 3 5 6 7
2 4 7
2 5

The instrument was administered during the last week of classes, prior to the final exam period. The 25 instructors were also asked to complete the same instrument and

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respond to three open-ended questions. All of the instructors except for Chem 120 decided they wanted to use the entire instrument, that is, including items related to outcomes their course did not propose to meet. Thus, only Chem 120 used a course-specific form. The purpose of the use of the entire form was to provide baseline data. Some believe that general education is a generalized concept and achievement of the outcomes is not related to specific courses.

Results

On the four common items (numbered 1 through 4 on the survey instrument), the mean scores ranged from 3.85 on item 2 to 3.60 on item 4. There were three items measuring each of the seven outcomes. Student responses were summed across the three items to produce a score for the outcome. Mean scores for the intended outcomes are provided in Table 1 (left column). The means ranged from 3.21 (outcome 2) to 3.67 (outcome 3). All are positive.

Table 1.
Mean Ratings by Students on Outcomes
With Intended and Baseline Comparison

Outcome #	Intended [a]		Baseline [b]	
	n	mean	n	mean
1	591[c]	3.38	329	3.23
2	1034	3.21	69	2.52
3	505	3.67	415	2.76
4	741	3.27	178	2.79
5	360	3.48	740	3.15
6	560	3.65	359	3.22
7	583	3.63	341	3.90

[a] Student ratings of outcomes addressed in the course.
[b] Baseline student ratings of outcomes **NOT** addressed in the course.
[c] Number of student responses varies by outcome pattern in the course.

The results of the baseline comparison are also provided in Table 1 (right column). Students (except those in Chem 120) responded to all the items, not only those related to the outcomes being addressed in the course. One would expect that student ratings of outcomes would be higher for those outcomes the course was deliberately addressing. As can be seen from the table, this was not found for outcome 7, lifelong learning, which had the highest rating of all outcomes, intended or baseline. Also, three of the outcomes (2, 3, and 4) had mean ratings lower than 3 (neutral). The baseline comparisons do provide useful benchmark data and lend themselves to interesting speculations.

Instructors were asked to complete the same survey form as the students. That was not very useful. The data provided no new information although the instructors did feel the intended outcomes were given more attention than the students reported. The instructors' responses to the three open-ended questions were much more useful. The questions were, (1) How well did you feel the course addressed the specified general education outcomes?, (2) Were there any extenuating circumstances which affected how well the specified general education outcomes were addressed in your class this semester?, and (3) Do you have any suggestions for improving the assessment of the outcomes? Instructors made very positive and specific comments about how they addressed the outcomes. They also had specific suggestions for how they could strengthen the relationship in their courses.

Conclusion

It is possible for a campus to develop a reasonable alternative to nationally normed tests to assess general education outcomes. One instructor summed it up this way: "Awareness of the general education outcomes and my intention to address them have made a positive difference in my teaching." And that is what assessment is all about.

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Copies of the instrument are available from Patricia Murphy.

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How the Process of Assessing General Education Leads to Change: A Progress Report

Richard W. Doctor
Frank P. Marczak

A committee of confused faculty, staff, and students, directed in January 1990 to evaluate the general education requirements at Muskegon Community College (MI), did not know where to begin. Then an innocent student, who had never heard of NCA or assessment, made the following suggestion: "Why don't we look in the catalog for the statement describing what students are supposed to learn in general education, find some ways to measure if students are learning it, look at the results and make changes if we need to?" This simple sequence—define, measure, analyze, change—not only provided direction to the general education committee, but became the focus of subsequent efforts to develop the College's "Plan to Assess Student Academic Achievement." These two overlapping activities merged, influenced each other, and led to the conclusions of this paper:

> Creating a workable assessment process, as opposed to trying to find the ideal assessment instruments, has been the key to changes in general education at Muskegon Community College. The assessment cycle adopted by the College led to ongoing changes in general education, and principles of good assessment have emerged from the process.

Of course, like many colleges, we had no statement in our catalog describing what students should learn in general education. We had distribution requirements that assured each department would get enough students to fill faculty loads, and a single line in the College's Mission Statement: "Enhance the broad general experiences necessary for persons to function as effective citizens." Committee members thus made their first task to answer the questions, "Why do we have general education requirements? What do we want students to learn?" A year-and-a-half later, a "Purpose Statement for General Education" was formally adopted by the faculty and the Board of Trustees. It defined six general abilities of an educated person to be cultivated by appropriate course work in nine areas of knowledge that also sought to develop four higher-level thinking skills. The "Statement" also said students needed to have four foundational skills prior to entering general education courses.

Defining the purposes of the College's general education mission had two immediate results: First, this starting point served as a model for how to approach assessment in all other academic areas, and second, it provided a focused direction for what to assess in general education.

The Assessment Model

One result was the official adoption of a philosophy of assessment:

- The publicly stated mission of Muskegon Community College should guide the actions of the faculty and staff.
- We ought to define explicitly the purposes of our actions, especially those that directly contribute to student learning.

- We should devise and continually refine methods to assess systematically how well our actions are accomplishing their purposes with special focus on how well students are learning.
- We should share the information obtained from assessment with our students and community and use it to refine our purposes and improve our actions.

To carry out these aims, the College plans to compare systematically the achievement of our students to the goals that we have for them and they have for themselves, analyze those comparisons, and make changes in our practices when a need to do so is indicated. To this end, all assessment activities are placed in the following assessment cycle.

Assessing General Education

One example of the assessment cycle (define, measure, analyze, change, repeat) in action is evident in the events that followed the adoption of the general education "Purpose Statement," in particular the section that said students entering general education courses should possess adequate foundational skills in writing, reading, math, and study skills. We did not know if students had these skills.

First, a variety of tests were administered to students entering basic skills courses, and scores were correlated with eventual final grades. The best predictors of student success, measured by grades, appeared to be the Nelson-Denny reading test, an essay generated from a faculty-created writing prompt, and an in-house math test. No adequate study skills test was found and that goal was dropped.

Next, the College adopted a mandatory testing requirement for all students in the areas of math, reading, and writing. After a year of testing, scores were correlated with student grades, and a strong correlation between reading level and grades was suggested.

This assessment led to the adoption of a comprehensive "Proposal to Increase Student Skills"; its main features included mandatory remediation during first semester of enrollment, skill prerequisites for all general education courses (to be phased in over a three-year period), and the creation of additional courses (the College already had remedial reading, writing, and math courses) to develop skills within a subject area.

Since this policy was adopted a number of statistical measures focusing on test scores, grades in remedial course work, retention, and grades in subsequent general have been analyzed with mixed results: some portions of the proposal are on hold until more conclusive data can be provided.

Further Changes

The creation of a "Purpose Statement" for general education has led to other ongoing assessment measures (not all successful). For example, all graduates complete a comprehensive survey of their perceptions about general education. Each question in the survey is directly related to a stated learning goal (example: knowledge of the competing ideologies that influence the modern, international climate) and consists of two parts: one has students describe how much they know about this goal, and the second evaluates to what degree the College played in acquiring that knowledge. Consistent responses by students saying they know little or nothing about goals that faculty have agreed are important has helped create a climate of willingness to make changes. Some assessment measures we have attempted, such as administering standardized general knowledge tests, have been abandoned because they do not directly relate to our purposes and do not provide detailed information that leads to change.

Additional changes in general education include:

- Combining two previous transfer degree options into one transfer associate degree.

- Making changes in existing courses (with a core of common learning in physical education classes serving as a model) based on objectives in the "Purpose Statement."
- Adopting a new set of general education course requirement categories based on the learning goals found in the "Purpose Statement" rather than departmental requirements.
- Adopting a procedure for faculty who teach courses in the new requirement categories to develop a core of common objectives and assessment measures.
- Developing assessment measures on the departmental level of general education skills or knowledge primarily taught in one department.

The process of assessing general education, begun in 1990, is not completed. The "assessment measures" referred to above have not yet been identified. Incompleteness is inherent in a cycle.

We are continuing to learn about assessment, but the following conclusions seem sound:

- The job of assessing is never done.
- The process of assessing is more important than the actual assessment activities or instruments.
- Both faculty and students should be involved in planning and evaluating assessment activities.
- Assessment activities themselves must be assessed.
- There are many ways to determine if students are learning.
- Assessment activities that yield unclear results can be helpful.
- There is a lot of talent and expertise on every campus.
- Assessment that does not lead to changes is not worth doing.
- Assessment is a human activity and should be approached with caution, respect, and humility.

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Integrating—and Assessing—General Education Across the Curriculum

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As Goals 2000 and the current debate over proposed history standards remind us, America has no nationwide standard educational curriculum, particularly in higher education. With few external constraints, each college or university determines its own degree requirements, course content, and proposed (or assumed) outcomes for student learning. One clue to the uniqueness of each American higher education institution is that part of the curriculum required of all students, best known as general education.

Reviewing general education requirements is a challenging process. The inevitable time constraints on degree completion mean that for every course added to the curriculum, someone else's course may need to be taken away. A recent cartoon in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (1994) portrays an academic debate, with one speaker contending that "Sure, we should have a core curriculum, but it should consist of particle physics, information processing, and the human genome." This cartoon reminds us of (1) the difficulty of keeping general education "general," (2) the temptation to add the latest innovations to the core, and (3) the territorial concerns that flavor the debate, leading one writer to comment, "The general education curriculum has been, both literally and figuratively, the cause of some of the bloodiest battles in academia" (Cohen, 1993).

The typical institutional approach to revising general education has been to appoint a college-wide committee, which eventually recommends adding one or more courses to the general education requirement. The responses from the faculty may range from dismay and hard feelings to open warfare.

At Washington State, we took a different approach. This article provides background on general education at Washington State, our efforts to agree on general educational goals that could be integrated into the curriculum, and how we plan to measure the impact on student learning.

A Clearly Defined Philosophy of General Education

Washington State Community College was chartered by the Ohio Board of Regents in 1991 after twenty years as a technical college. In 1993, as the college began preparing for the upcoming accreditation visit from the North Central Association, a special NCA self-study sub-committee was established to report on the General Institutional Requirement that *"General education...is an essential element of undergraduate...programs two or more academic years in length" (GIR #16).*

Since Washington State's general/basic studies or general education requirements had been developed one program at a time, we anticipated that it would be difficult to describe an institution-wide "rationale" for the general education program beyond meeting the basic Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) requirements. It would be even more difficult to measure student learning outcomes in general education if we did not first describe what we expected those outcomes to be. Therefore, the committee began at "square one," following the steps below.

- **Starting Where We Are.** The committee determined from the beginning that any college–wide general education requirements should be grounded in, not imposed on, the academic programs. Therefore we began by reviewing general education/basic studies requirements program by program, in part to determine what *de facto* college–wide goals might be in practice. For example, virtually every academic program requires a computer applications course.

  Most technical (career) program degree requirements were derived from the Ohio Board of Regents distribution requirements for general studies and basic related courses, and the limited menu of general studies courses that had been available at Washington Technical College.

  The new transfer degrees met the state distribution requirements for the Associate of Science (AS) and Associate of Arts (AA) degrees as well as the Transfer Module, a subset of general education requirements that is transferable to any Ohio state college or university. Courses in Speech and Computer Applications were also required.

- **Articulating Goals for All Graduates.** The committee then addressed the challenge of developing a rationale for general education applicable to, and accepted by, the entire college. This effort built on the results of a group brainstorming activity at a June 1993 faculty meeting, addressing the following question: *What should every Washington State graduate know or be able to do?* Small groups of faculty came up with responses indicating a surprising consensus on important skills and knowledge for all our graduates.

  Based on these statements, the committee worked to define institution–wide general education goals. First we defined seven categories of common skills and knowledge, and reviewed them to determine which lent themselves to "ability" statements, and which to "knowledge of" statements. The committee gathered sample statements from a variety of sources and began to work as a "committee of the whole" to develop and refine draft goal statements (below).

- **Reaching Consensus.** The seven goal statements were circulated to the college faculty and administration for reaction and comment. Those who were involved in this review process unanimously supported the goal statements.

- **Developing an Institutional Goal on General Education.** The General Education committee also developed an institutional goal statement that more clearly addressed the importance of general education, which was accepted as part of the review and revision of institutional goals for the NCA self-study.

Assessing Our Current Status

The committee had already described how the general education requirements of the college's degree programs met certain *external* criteria, such as the OBR guidelines and the Transfer Module. Now it was necessary to determine where each associate's degree program stood in relation to the new college–wide general education goals. In September 1994, each associate's degree program responded to a two–part survey, determining (1) in what ways the *academic program* already addressed each general education goal, and (2) what *specific courses* offered by the department or discipline met the general education goal.

The results of the survey were very informative. On the one hand, most of the goals are already being addressed in some way. Problem–solving, for example, is addressed throughout most of the technical programs. On the other hand, it is questionable whether American History meets the World Awareness goal to the same extent as World Civilization.

A report of the General Education Sub–Committee's work was prepared for the NCA accreditation team visit in October 1994. The college's Self–Study Report also addressed the overall plan for assessing student learning in terms of academic program outcomes, indicating that technical programs were being assessed through job placement rates, employer surveys, and so on, but general education and the transfer programs were largely ignored.

General Education Goals

Upon Completion of an Associate's Degree Program, a Washington State Community College Graduate should have:

1. The ability to use various forms of communication more effectively both as a communicator and an observer.
2. The ability to select and use appropriate and effective approaches and tools in solving a wide variety of problems (scientific, mathematical, social, and personal).
3. The ability to think critically as demonstrated by evaluating information from multiple perspectives, drawing reasonable conclusions, and defending them rationally.
4. The ability and desire to continue as an independent learner engaged in a lifelong process of discovery.
5. The ability to use knowledge of technology and scientific principles to adapt to a technologically changing society.
6. An awareness of the importance of international understanding in an increasingly interdependent global community.
7. An increased awareness of the similarities and differences that express the human experience.

Implementing the New General Education Goals

Using (1) the NCA team's recommendations on more explicit plans for validating student learning in the general education, (2) the survey results, and (3) our own assumptions about the assessment plan, guidelines have been developed for implementing and assessing the new general education goals:

- **General education requirements must evidence faculty involvement and support.** The Community College Humanities Association (1991) recommends that "Successful integration of humanities into occupational degree programs demands understanding by administration, instructors, and professional staff." These recommendations apply equally well to all general education. A basic premise of our process is to respect the academic integrity of *all* academic programs and courses and their potential contribution toward student achievement of general education goals. How each goal is met will be proposed by program faculty.
- **General education requirements will be integrated into courses and programs.** The general education goals are not to be limited to a separate set of "distribution" courses, but are to be integrated into each academic program. Program faculty are responsible for describing how these goals are or will be addressed in their associate degree program, and how the achievement of these goals will be documented.

Assessing General Education

- **Student growth and learning in all academic programs should be assessed relative to stated objectives for knowledge/skills in all of the general education goals.** As the Community College Humanities Association recommends (1991), "No one [general education] course can ensure all

Goal 6: World Awareness

As an illustration of integration, our best example is the current initiative to include international modules in existing courses. In May 1994, five faculty members and one administrator attended the Internationalizing the Curriculum Conference at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, MI. The approach advocated at the conference suggests that more community college students will be impacted by international modules in existing courses, than by developing separate courses required of some students. Each faculty member completed an international module to be included in one of their courses during the 1994-95 academic year, including Broadcasting Station Operations, Marketing, Intermediate Accounting II, Interpersonal Communication, and Spanish V.

The Internationalizing the Curriculum faculty team has been asked to establish criteria for approving a content area course with an international module as meeting the World Awareness goal. Courses in such fields as arts, humanities, social science may meet the World Awareness goal by virtue of their content. Faculty will be asked to show how those courses include opportunities for students to demonstrate their "awareness."

outcomes will be achieved, but the total [general education] component in each program should do so." Program faculty will determine how the goals will be met in each academic degree program, with review by the College Curriculum Committee. This assessment approach also confirms the potential contribution of technical instruction toward goal achievement.

- **Assessment should emphasize mastery and competency over time–on–task.**

Goal 1: Communication Skills

The only college-wide graduation requirement at this time is a four-course sequence in communications, universally three courses in composition and one in speech communication. Should the number of courses completed or writing competence determine achievement? The communication skills faculty is reviewing this requirement in terms of the highest level course to be successfully completed, as well as other writing-across-the-curriculum approaches such as writing-intensive courses in the major. Since many of our composition courses are taught by part-time faculty, methods for documenting writing competency at the completion of each composition course will be reviewed.

- **The plan to assess student achievement of general education goals must use appropriate measures and have a realistic time line.** Assessment will be implemented within the credit course structure as much as possible. The current time line for implementation of the general education goals includes describing which current courses meet each of the general education goals (and how they assess the goal), and establishing how the goals are met in each academic degree program by the end of the 1994–95 academic year. This will provide a full year for curriculum adjustments and new course development, and for beginning the assessment process before the next college catalog is published in 1996.

- **The plan to assess student achievement of general education goals must provide for appropriate administration**. To the extent possible, the plan will be achieved within the existing organizational structure of the college. Assessment of student learning outcomes will be integrated into faculty planning and reporting at the department level. Approval of courses to meet the general education goals will be monitored by existing committees. In the initial stages, a proposed course will be reviewed by the Committee on Assessing Student Learning Outcomes before presenting it to the College Curriculum Committee. Eventually all such proposals will be approved by the Curriculum Committee, which is a standing committee of the college.

- **The plan to assess student achievement of general education goals must demonstrate that it will lead to institutional improvement.** Implementation of the general education program means that both program and course reviews will be based on learning outcomes. General education assessment will provide the impetus for quality assurance, not only for degree programs, but for every course.

  Integrating the new General Education Goals into each curriculum will provide an improved learning experience for all our students. In addition, we expect to have a new recognition by our own faculty and the community as a whole that a Washington State Community College education provides something beyond the separate associate's degree programs students complete.

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Development of an Essay to Measure College Program Outcomes

Rose Hartley
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Introduction

The purpose of this session is to describe the processes used in selecting and implementing the essay method as a means to evaluate college programs across three graduating levels.

Clarkson College is a small, private, single-purpose institution dedicated to educating health professionals. Originally a hospital-based nursing program, and then a college of nursing, Clarkson has recently expanded to included programs at the certificate/ associate degree level in occupational therapy, physical therapy, and x-ray technology; at the baccalaureate level in business administration, medical imaging, and nursing; and at the master's level in management and nursing. A large proportion of the student body is non-traditional, and an increasing number of students are earning degrees by distance. The greatest number of students are enrolled in nursing programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

The Mission Statement of the College specifies expected outcome competencies related to critical thinking, communication, and application of ethical reasoning. The College Assessment Subcommittee was charged with the following tasks:

- Determining the degree of competence expected at graduation for each degree level
- Selecting or designing methods of measurement
- Implementing the process and interpreting results
- Conveying results back to the Assessment Committee for dissemination to faculty

Changes in curriculum and instructional strategy are thus based upon outcome measurement results.

Making the Decision

Three major issues entered into the decision about how to evaluate the program outcomes stated in our Mission:

- operationalizing the three concepts defined by the faculty,
- determining appropriate criteria for each graduating level, and
- selecting a measurement method specific enough to provide relevant information for curricular revision.

Because quantitative measures do not reveal useful differences among different levels of learners, the decision was made to develop an essay with scoring criteria that specifies the levels of written communication, ethical reasoning, and critical thinking typical of our college entrants and graduates at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate levels.

Review of the literature revealed that most articles about critical thinking developed rather general descriptors along with generous amounts of conventional wisdom about how to instill the dispositions for critical thinking in students across the educational continuum. In contrast, Ennis and Norris (1985), who earlier authored a published test on critical thinking, specified categorical elements useful in operationally defining the construct and provided both concrete scoring criteria and discussion about scoring issues. The Ennis and Norris criteria also embodied elements of communication/clarity that provide sufficient structure for our needs. In the fall of 1993 the subcommittee therefore elected to use the work of Ennis and Norris as a foundation for developing the essay and our own categorical scoring rules.

Implementing the Process

Faculty with special interests or expertise in critical thinking, communication, and ethics provided input for establishing categorical scoring rules. Six scoring categories include:

- clarity of problem statement
- use of credible sources
- overall organization and clarity of communication
- formation/soundness of inferences and judgments
- application of ethical reasoning
- ability to form a conclusion

One essay issue has been developed thus far. All entering and graduating students are required to write a response to the essay question at designated times. Off-campus students are mailed the essay issue and are expected to return their response prior to graduating.

Measurement Validity and Reliability

The most important and time consuming aspect of using the essay as a measure of outcomes, has been establishing valid scoring rules that are reliably applied. This has entailed development of a preliminary set of rules with an ongoing validation process to determine goodness-of-fit in clearly delineating differences among four levels for each of the component categories.

Faculty selected for this process have to be committed to attending frequent, long meetings to hash out rule derivation, achieve consensual agreement on scoring, and undergo periodic reevaluation to assure that interscorer reliability remains at or above .80 using Cohen's Kappa K statistic.

College Administrative Support

A corresponding issue to that of faculty commitment is that College administration has had to make provisions in faculty workload to assure that valid and reliable measurement occurs. This is not always possible in small private colleges due to increasing budget constraints and may be a factor to consider when deciding upon this form of evaluation.

Conclusion

The project is still in the process of becoming, but already, data derived from analysis of essay results have met the goal of providing input for change in course design and instructional strategies. Faculty are excited about the process and about the quality of data obtained. Currently a second group of scorers is being trained to achieve reliability. Undoubtedly, refinement of the process will continue.

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Mathematics Under an Assessment Lens: A Case Study

Sandra Z. Keith

The assessment process at St. Cloud State has had an impact on curriculum thinking in the Department of Mathematics in two ways: (1) broadly, in the realm of thinking about quantitative literacy on campus and nationally, and (2) specifically, in the assessment of our pure mathematics major.

Quantitative Literacy, General Education, and its Politics

While last year's AAHE national conference on Assessment and Quality stressed the importance of writing as an assessment indicator, little or no mention was made of quantitative literacy, or "numeracy." Student performance on the quantitative literacy portion of standardized tests is in fact, declines after college [1]. Recent predictions anticipate a 73% increase in jobs requiring mathematically and computer-literate individuals [2], yet many students in colleges (such as ours) can bypass a mathematics requirement altogether. This means that what mathematics students do learn may be learned in other departments. If this is not an assessment concern for mathematics departments and administrators, it should be.

The proper home for a quantitative literacy requirement is the general education course traditionally taught in mathematics departments. But unlike English departments, which have concerned themselves with the writing proficiency of students, we have traditionally turned our backs to the issue of general education mathematics [3]. At my university, we offer a fairly typical general education mathematics course, described as "Cultural Mathematics—topics to be chosen by the instructor," probably an assessor's nightmare. The course may cover anything from formal proofs to the mathematics of Africa, but as a rule, this course usually operates *without any algebra.* To ignore the algebra students have spent years learning in high school is to imply that this mathematics is not useful. And one does not have to look very far to find this message reflected across campus: our students were found to perceive very little mathematics in general education courses at large—even science courses.

Looking for assistance in the national mathematics community, we find it much more concerned with the reform of calculus [4] than with general education mathematics, which nevertheless involves many more students. In part, this seems a result of the fact that responsibility for the course has fallen to part-time faculty and graduate assistants who must ensure student satisfaction. But after doing things the same way for 50 years, mathematics departments seem to want to resist pressure to shift from preparing the elite to redefining themselves more broadly as a service department, with the concomitant need for cross-curricular dialogue. To make matters worse, other departments are already forming their own notions of quantitative literacy—for some departments it may be defined as the use of the computer to learn a foreign language or the embracing of alternative sciences such as homeopathy or creationism. Nevertheless our students have never seemed so mathematically illiterate—many seniors cannot compute the interest on their credit cards, read a bar chart, and they may not even be able to solve equations such as $2x = 3$.

Mathematics departments must take a leadership role in cross-curricular dialogues about what constitutes quantitative literacy, and how it can be assessed. And since most of us hope that students will develop an ability to think critically in the technical language of mathematics, we would like some appropriately formative assessment measures. Unfortunately measures such as these have never been automatic with us [5]. In mathematics, classes mean lectures, student input—test scores, and student feedback—the grades we assign. Formative assessment practices currently embraced by other departments (interactive classroom assessment techniques, writing assignments, focus groups) do not necessarily prove practical for us. Hopefully, in future we may learn to design styles of assessment that measure what we want to measure. But perhaps at this stage, our best expectation is that assessment techniques can help us focus more sharply on the problems.

This became my experience, when teaching our large general education mathematics course gave me the opportunity to experiment with multiple assessment measures. I reviewed course catalogues from other colleges, and did preliminary, middle, and late surveying of the class. I set objectives, assigned group and computer activities, lab projects, writing assignments, and held classroom discussions. From time to time I obtained student evaluations and reported this feedback to the students. What all this revealed was not only insights into the good and bad points of my teaching, but also a much clearer identification of the major problems in mathematics presentation that this course has been absorbing.

Specifically, we need to ask: What should the course cover? Why do students take this course? (Many of my students reported it was the only course available.) Who are the students in the course, and how do they feel about mathematics? (My surveys revealed that mathematics anxiety was high.) What will these students need in the way of the "last" mathematics they may take—and why do we avoid using algebra? Are prerequisites needed? How can we build computers into the course? (No current texts or materials exist for this.) What sort of career advising needs to be built into the course, for our job-focused students, to justify this course? (My students envisioned they would never use a computer in their future careers.) What teaching/learning styles are most beneficial for these students and how should we grade? How do we assess student learning, and our own performance? (Classic evaluation forms pose as a deterrent to reform methods of teaching.) And lastly, how can we interest other faculty in the problems of this course, so that long-needed changes can take place?

In our panel presentation, I will be addressing some of the issues embedded in these questions.

Major Program Assessment: The BA Major

At the deeper level of program assessment, our department needed to respond to the university assessment steering committee for plans for self-assessment. At this stage, we were simply required to check off on a matrix grid what student learning objectives we would be preparing to measure, with what instruments. Our teacher education program was running well with program objectives responding to NCATE. However, for those of us involved with the pure mathematics major, the matrix at first created consternation. Our initial consensus was that our program would document its effectiveness by its maintenance of tough grading standards, as seen in the low GPA in mathematics courses. In fact, we planned merely to check off "specialized knowledge and quantitative thinking to be evaluated by GPA." My panel presentation will discuss the particulars of the matrix approach, and how it proved to be a dynamic process that opened the department to seeing assessment as a non-threatening process of growth, with a better recognition of how assessment can offer us an interesting and useful way to understand and rationalize what we do.

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The Multicultural Requirement In General Education

Karen Schmid

Background

Saint Cloud State University (SCSU) has had an MGM (multicultural-gender-minority) requirement since 1989. The impetus for this requirement came from a faculty general education committee. The faculty built their proposal upon a recommendation from our report from North Central, which suggested the need for greater evidence of consistency with the portion of our mission statement that declared that SCSU "is committed to reflect the scholarship of women and various cultural groups and to instill a sensitivity to the values of a diverse society and a multicultural world."

The MGM requirement is part of the general education requirement; students are required to complete twelve credits of MGM courses within their general education program. (Transfer students also are required to complete MGM credits, the number determined by the number of credits being transferred.) Individuals and departments may submit proposals for an MGM course, which are reviewed by the faculty MGM committee. Courses proposed for MGM status must first be approved as part of the general education program, then are reviewed according to the MGM criteria.

In order to qualify for MGM status, a course must meet all of the following requirements:

- It furthers the general aim of the MGM requirement, which is to foster respect for human dignity and differences.
- It promotes respect for human dignity and differences by methods that employ and strengthen the cognitive and critical powers of students by an impartial and critical examination of facts, interpretations of facts, and arguments.
- At least 70% of the course (i.e., seven out of ten weeks) is devoted to MGM subject matter.
- The course clearly falls into one of the following categories: multicultural, gender, minority[1].

Similar to the general education program, our approach to MGM is cafeteria-style. Forty-seven courses[2], located in 28 departments/centers, have been approved for MGM status. MGM courses are offered in four out of the five colleges. However, enrollments primarily are clustered in courses offered in the College of Social Sciences. Courses range from Introduction to Women's Studies to Cultural Botany. Forty percent of MGM courses are new courses, added since 1989.

The wide distribution of courses in many departments is deliberate. The general education review committee report, issued when the MGM requirement was established, stated that this requirement "will force many departments to reflect on and to rectify their previous omissions in this vital area. Many different disciplines offer important perspectives concerning these matters."

Assessment Issues

A task force composed of faculty, students, and administrators has been proposed to discuss assessment of MGM courses and the requirement. Issues include MGM program objectives, revalidation of MGM courses, and methods to assess the effects of the program.

Criteria for designation as an MGM course are clearly spelled out, however, the objectives of the MGM program have never been determined or agreed upon. Different faculty, students, and administrators hold different assumptions about the goals and objectives of the MGM component of general education. For some, the primary goals are to identify and take action against oppression. For others, the primary goals are to examine varied cultural groups and issues related to gender.

The MGM requirement and designated courses raise some interesting assessment issues. One is assessment of courses that deal with difficult topics such as racism and make students uncomfortable. MGM courses are part of general education, which many students view as a chore to be completed as painlessly as possible before moving into major courses. Add on top of this the MGM focus, which may be disturbing and discomfiting at times. Negative reactions and resistance by some students are expected. Are student satisfaction measures appropriate? Would timing of assessment of MGM courses make a difference, at least on student perception of the courses? Perhaps students need time to reflect upon when they have learned, which is difficult during a one-quarter class. One suggestion is extensive use of classroom assessment to help instructors better understand and use student reactions to difficult material.

Another issue is the political focus of some MGM courses. A number of MGM courses take an explicit social reconstructionist/activist approach to curriculum and social change (see Banks & Banks, 1989; Sleeter & Grant, 1988). Some on (and off) campus view this as inappropriate. MGM courses have had their share of controversy, including discussion in a newspaper published by a group called SAVE (Students Advocating Valid Education; the purpose of their newsletter is "to provide critical analysis, social commentary, satire, and whatever else we deem fit concerning the ongoing political agendas of the leftist ideologues in charge of MN's universities today").

Many MGM courses are focused on attitude and value change, on both the micro and macro levels. The assessment movement and literature have focused very little on these topics. For example, the closest the Angelo and Cross Teaching Goals Inventory (1994) comes is the goal "Fostering student development and personal growth," which includes items such as "Develop an informed concern about contemporary social issues" and "Develop an informed appreciation of other cultures." However, there is nothing related to developing a concern or engaging in actions related to oppression, commitment to equality, human rights, social change, and so on. Much work is needed on appropriate means to assess student learning of attitudes and values, and indeed the place of attitude and value change and social change as objectives of courses and programs in higher education.

A revalidation process has just begun. Courses that have MGM status will be examined every five years by a faculty committee to determine whether the course continues to meet the MGM criteria. Discussion is ongoing on what those criteria should be, related to the political issues raised above.

Assessment has brought to the surface several issues related to the general education MGM requirement. This again demonstrates one of the most useful aspects of assessment—that it forces us to think more deeply about what we are doing, to become more reflective practitioners.

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[1] These terms are defined as follows:

Multicultural: A multicultural course is one whose subject matter is one or more living cultures other than those that are dominant in the United States or Canada and other than those that are dominant in Northern and Western Europe, in Australia, and New Zealand. Thus, courses dealing with Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, the Pacific Islands, the former Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe would qualify under this heading. So, also, (for example) would courses in Romany or Innuit culture.

Such courses will deal with one or more facets of the culture or cultures in question, including, but not necessarily limited to, art, literature, religion (or philosophy), kinship structure, technology, legal system, or history.

Gender: A course falling under this heading will address the social, legal, psychological, philosophical, and/or other issues arising from gender and sexual orientation differences in our society as well as in the larger human community. Among the modes by which gender and sexual orientation issues may be addressed would be those of art and literature.

Minority: A course falling under this heading will study the varied modes of living, the accomplishments, and the problems of minorities (where the term "minority" is understood as referring to groups traditionally viewed as racial minorities in the U.S. having origins in the indigenous populations of the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, including the Caribbean and West Indies.) The history, art, and literature, as well as the legal and social status (and consequent problems) of such groups would be suitable topics for courses under this rubric.

All courses in this category must concern themselves with the human and cultural value of the oppressed group *and* the experience of unequal treatment and/or abuse suffered by the group.

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Skills Related to National Goals 5.5

Elizabeth A. Jones

In the Winter of 1990, the President of the United States and state governors announced six educational goals for the nation that are to be achieved by the year 2000. Objective Five of Goal Five recommends that "the proportion of college graduates who demonstrate an advanced ability to think critically, communicate effectively, and solve problems will increase substantially." What constitutes advanced abilities in these areas and how do we know if students have mastered these skills? Employers, policy makers, parents and the public have been concerned with the achievements of college graduates. The need for college graduates to communicate effectively and make decisions is very important in our society where the daily operations and success of business organizations are contingent upon managing, considering a wide range of choices, documenting, reporting, and interpreting large amounts of complex information. In nearly every study that has investigated the qualities employers most desire in their employees, good communication skills rank high among the top priorities of those in business and industry.

While many individuals would agree that critical thinking and communication skills are important, there is little consensus about what constitutes the specific skills that college graduates need to be effective employees in the workplace and citizens in society. We have worked with advisory boards and focus groups to develop writing, speech and listening, and critical thinking goals inventories. These instruments identify the full range of potential skills that are essential for college graduates to achieve and are based upon extensive literature reviews.

With support from the National Center for Education Statistics, we recently surveyed more than 600 employers, faculty, and policy makers. These participants volunteered their time and expertise to make judgments and evaluations about the relative importance of extensive lists of specific skills that ranged from very basic to more advanced levels. Through an iterative process, these participants had the opportunity to agree or disagree with the importance of a variety of skills.

We determined that there is a consensus about the importance of a core of critical thinking and communication skills. This session will highlight the agreements as well as disagreements. Faculty, employers, and policy makers believe that certain interpretation skills are important. College graduates should be able to detect indirect persuasion including the use of leading questions that are biased toward eliciting a preferred response, the use of misleading language that exaggerates or downplays the importance of something, the use of slanted definitions of comparisons that express bias for or against a position, and detect instances where irrelevant topics or considerations are brought into an argument to divert attentions from the original issue.

A key component of interpretation is the ability to categorize information. The respondents agreed that college graduates should be able to make comparisons, formulate frameworks or categories, classify data, and translate information from one medium to another. In order to make clear the meaning of words, issues, conclusions or beliefs, college graduates need to recognize confusing or vague language; ask relevant or penetrating questions, identify and seek additional resources and develop analogies or other forms of comparisons; and provide examples to explain ideas. These results are consistent with the outcomes from Facione's (1990) study about critical thinking skills.

In general, when there were disagreements about the importance of critical thinking skills, faculty tended to rate them significantly higher than employers and policy makers. Most individuals considered certain critical thinking skills to be important but what differed was the level of importance they gave to individual skills. For example, faculty believed that the ability to detect strong emotional language is critical. When employers and policy makers compared this skill with others on this list, they did not believe it was as important as the faculty rated it. Often employers and policy makers did not find particular skills to be important within their own organizational contexts. Given the nature of job responsibilities in certain companies, employers noted that some skills are not nearly as important as others. Employers believed that their organizations dealt with objective, factual information where emotional language is not encountered in their view.

Respondents rated as essential the ability to identify the explicit and implicit features of a communication, especially in arguments that put forth conclusions. Students should be able to examine ideas and purposes by assessing the constraints on the practical applications and be able to assess the interests, attitudes, or views contained in those ideas. The ability to identify stated, implied or undeclared purposes of a communication was rated significantly higher by the policy makers. Some faculty noted the difficulties of teaching students these particular skills, and this perception could account for their lower ratings.

College graduates should be able to assess the credibility of a communication and evaluate the strengths of claims and arguments. Specifically, students need to: determine if arguments rest on false, biased, or doubtful assumptions; evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and reliability of sources of information; assess the importance of arguments and determine if they merit attention; evaluate arguments in terms of reasonability and practicality; assess statistical information ; determine how new data may lead to further confirmation or questions of a conclusion; determine if conclusions are derived from sufficiently large and representative samples; and evaluate analogies.

All three groups agreed that inference skills were important, including the abilities to collect and question evidence; to develop alternatives; to seek evidence to confirm or disconfirm alternatives; to seek opinions of others; to assess the risks and benefits of each option; and to develop new alternatives when appropriate. The ability to draw conclusions also was important. College graduates should be able to develop informed, well–reasoned conclusions that draw on the views of others but that represent an individual's own independent analysis/synthesis and his/her own summaries. College graduates should also be able to clearly communicate and justify the results of their reasoning.

Employers, faculty, and policy makers agreed that dispositions are important. These are behavioral tendencies or traits of mind that concern how college graduates are inclined to use their thinking skills. College graduates should be curious, organized, fair–minded, open–minded, flexible, creative, and should persevere, apply insights from other cultures, find ways to collaborate, value the application of reason, and willingly self–correct and learn from errors.

There are certain ideal skills that are crucial for college graduates to attain. These ideals may serve as considerations for further dialogue and for a guide for assessment and curricular reform. Gaps in student learning between the ideal skills and those that they achieve in reality may help faculty target the development of more specific skills. Colleges and universities do not have the same curricular goals and expected outcomes for their college students, nor should this be an expectation. Instead, this work points the way to essential skills that faculty may wish to consider when they are making revisions to the curriculum or their own classes. A strength of our institutions is that they provide a universe of knowledge and a curriculum that is the mirror of a technologically, socially, and economically complex society. Such curricular complexity has been a necessity, given the diversity of students who enroll in postsecondary programs with different goals, interests, and expectations. Postsecondary assessment must reflect and describe the diversity of that curriculum if it is to enhance our students' abilities.

Students need to acquire basic communication skills and develop cognitive abilities to understand principles, concepts, or ideas. However, students must move beyond being simply receivers or transmitters of information. In order to reach advanced skills in writing, speaking, and listening, college students need to develop their critical thinking skills in order to evaluate, analyze, and make judgments about the multitude of messages or interactions they encounter in their daily lives. Ideally, college graduates will learn to assume responsibility for their own intellectual development that will continue beyond the formal education they receive in college. The improvement of these skills should help students to become better citizens and employees in real world contexts.

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Chapter VII

Focus on Criterion Three: Assessment of Student Academic Achievement

Selling Assessment: The Ethics of Assessment and Faculty Culture

David H. Fisher

Two Problems with Assessment

Administrators or college faculty who wish to persuade their colleagues of the worth of extra-classroom assessment of student learning must confront two challenges: First, the assessment movement is an insult (sometimes intended) to the integrity and professionalism of the college teaching profession. Second, the ethical assumptions behind assessment are utilitarian. Members of most college faculties resent the insult, and with some exceptions, tend to question the cost/benefit mentality of utilitarianism. It is hardly surprising that college faculty, many of whom perceive themselves as overworked, underpaid, and undervalued, will resent the implied insult of assessment. Nor should it be surprising, in a profession whose primary rewards are qualitative and personal, that there would be resistance to meeting demands imposed by an ethical perspective that tends to be quantitative and "objective."

In the remarks that follow I propose that we deal with these two challenges by placing them in a larger cultural perspective, in order to clear the way for a more positive ethical argument in support of assessment. The basis for this argument is a character or virtue ethical perspective; one that understands education as a practice supported by a community of learning. I state briefly some of the main ideas of a character/virtue perspective, focusing on care as a primary virtue of such learning communities. Finally I outline an argument that defends the value of programs to assess student learning. Properly designed and employed, assessment can become a way to support competent, informed caring for both students and faculty.

My motive in presenting this argument is simple: I am one of those faculty who initially perceived the insult to the profession implied in the assessment movement. Further, as a philosopher specializing in ethics and value theory, I believe that utilitarianism is limited as a valid approach to morality. I am, however, also a faculty member who has been convinced that *properly represented and used, assessment of student learning can be helpful in fostering a teaching–learning community*. The following remarks thus represent an attempt to share a personal perspective that may be useful in dealing with the challenges of selling assessment.

The central demands of assessment: an institution–wide system of assessment including "feedback loops with teeth" (i.e., feedback that leads to actual changes in individual and collective pedagogy, in the words of one consultant–evaluator) and "multiple measures" for the assessment *other than the grades given by instructors in a course*, represent a vote of no–confidence in the college teaching profession. Such demands imply that as individuals and/or as members of a department, faculty are neither competent to recognize their failed pedagogy nor sufficiently motivated to improve teaching without the threat of external monitoring of results. Faculty often turn to the nearest available targets—local administrators—as the source of this insult. Administrators, many of whom may feel a strong sense of identification with the faculty culture of which they were once a part often turn *their* resentment onto accrediting bodies such as NCA.

In truth however accrediting bodies like NCA are only responding to increasing pressures from local, state, and federal political institutions. Politicians—themselves increasingly the target of voter rage and cynicism and suspect as a profession—reflect a public mood in which accountability for costly professional services is a central theme. The demand for accountability is a widespread one affecting almost every profession in contemporary

American society. The press toward term limits for public office holders and the popularity of legislation by referendum are both part of this wider demand. The medical profession, forced to bear increasing costs of liability insurance as a necessary defense against litigious patients, has recently received some support from politicians for limits on tort liability to contain rising medical costs. But if managed care and for-profit HMO's represent the wave of the future, it is easy to predict a steady decrease in physician professional autonomy (i.e., control over medical decisions about which services are appropriate) and an increase in "bottom line" accountability for containing costs and increasing profits, subject only to legal liability. Performance evaluations of clergy in many denominations are being implemented today, in the face of declining membership and conflicts over the proper definition of religious belief.

The problems with lay demands for external measures of accountability in a profession, *however valid the complaints that produced such demands may be*, are that they then inhibit the ability of professionals to form sound fiduciary relationships with their clients, and to decrease the sense of intrinsic rewards associated with the practice of a profession. While all properly motivated professionals seek to provide good service for their clients, to the extent that they have bonded with their profession during their training *a significant part of most professionals' reward is derived from the practice of the profession itself, including interactions with fellow professionals, without regard to outcome*. This is often neglected by those seeking to improve professional performance from outside a profession, resulting in unnecessary hostility between public and a profession; so it is worthwhile to underline the reasons for the phenomenon of intrinsic reward.

Professionals are given a large amount of redundant information, skills, and theoretical structures during their training, much of which will not be used directly in the ordinary conduct of the profession. Just as one does not need to know, in a direct sense, all that a J.D. has been taught about admiralty law to practice law in Kansas in most cases, so one does not need to know all that a Ph.D. in Literature knows about the area of the dissertation or even the special field itself in order to teach Freshman Composition. Yet it is this very "redundant" information *(from a lay or a novice professional's perspective)* that if conscientiously developed, enhanced, and reinforced, functions as an important indirect background of understanding, enabling expert professionals to make continuous improvements in judgment and performance. The ability to make appropriate responses to multiple levels of learner inquiry in teaching, for example, comes in part from the theoretical knowledge of the central problems of a discipline.

When one is told that it is only immediate results—as measured by someone other than the professional who provides the service—that count in evaluation of professional performance, one is being told that clients need some protection other than that provided by one's professional ethics, and that what one most values about the practice itself is not important. One thus comes to think of clients—students, in this case—defensively and "teaches to the evaluation instrument," or reduces demands to the point where one can readily demonstrate a high percentage of student mastery by some "objective" measure. The fiduciary relationship between client and professional is replaced by one of mutual suspicion and hostility.

The typical administrative response to these implied challenges is to avoid talking directly about them, cloaking assessment initiatives in Administr-ese: an obscure dialect of Management-ese. This fools no one. The best way to address the insult involved in assessment is to acknowledge it at the beginning, but to then stress three points in response: (1) that the teaching profession *as a whole* has in fact been lax in policing itself; (2) that demands for accountability are a cultural phenomenon, extending far beyond the teaching profession; and (3) that the best way to repair any damage to public perception of teachers is by diligent, competent, non-defensive responses to those demands.

The first point will be obvious to any member of a college faculty who has had to carry additional burdens of administration and service because of colleagues who have stopped doing anything other than teach—and that not always creatively—once the security of tenure had been achieved. It will be even more painfully obvious to those who have had to undo damage to individual students, to a department, or to an institution caused by the rare faculty predator who actively harms students in some way such as through sexual harassment before he or she is caught.

The second and third points, beyond the thought that "misery loves company," urge faculty to note the failure of other professions to deal defensively with public demands for accountability. While attorneys, physicians, and politicians all deliver different services, it is worth considering the ways in which members of these professions—all of which are more socially and economically powerful than teaching on the whole—have failed in their efforts to contain or disarm public outrage by blame shifting.

Physicians, who blame attorneys for increasing medical malpractice costs, and attorneys, who blame incompetent physicians (and competent physicians unwilling to police their own colleagues) for the problem of malpractice, have not succeeded in shifting public ire away from their respective professions. Nor have politicians been successful in their attempts to shift blame for failed or overly costly policies from their party to the other party: *all* incumbents suffer when the public becomes frustrated with politicians in general. It would seem that efforts to dilute public anger by shifting blame to another profession or to "bad apples" in one's own are not likely to be successful in the long run. The best defense in the face of public indignation, justified or unjustified, is a good offense: one that demonstrates the concern of a profession for self-improvement.

The emphasis on immediate, observable results in learners clearly identifies assessment as based on a utilitarian moral perspective. In utilitarianism, the good is equated with the greatest possible good result (or least possible, harmful result) for the greatest possible number of persons affected by an action or policy. It is the cumulative result for an aggregate whole (in which each individual counts as one but no more than one), and not the principles or motives of individuals that count in moral evaluation of the policy in question. Utilitarianism is the inevitable ethical theory for middle managers, in education as in other fields, for several reasons.

Middle managers are directly accountable for the aggregate results produced by those they supervise. Admissions directors and coaches often survive or fail based on their student head count. Business managers who contain costs and/or produce surplus funds are perceived as successful. Higher administrators must demonstrate overall institutional results to Trustees in quantitative terms. Utilitarianism focuses on results. Further, when forced to make trade-offs between demands from different sectors of an institution, middle managers must convert a variety of conflicting needs and demands into some single unit or units of measurement if they are to justify their reasons for increasing or decreasing allocations of resources to different departments, divisions, or other units.

From a faculty perspective, however, utilitarianism misses the most important points in the entire educational enterprise: the moral obligations arising within the context of one-on-one contracts between faculty and students, and those time and energy consuming, solitary research projects that may not directly "pay off" in immediate results for years. Faculty are thus natural deontologists: i.e., they are strongly self-motivated individuals with a sense of duties, rights, and responsibilities, usually well articulated through rationally supported principles. Further, given the training necessary to function in the role of college teachers, faculty tend to believe that they—and only they—are equipped to make proper judgments about what constitutes adequate performance.

This challenge is more difficult to confront than the first one, since it touches on a central difference between administrative and faculty cultures in many institutions. Here, the renewal of interest in varieties of an ethic of virtue in the field of normative ethics is relevant as a resource for a solution. Over the last twenty years the fields of ethical theory and applied normative ethics have been sharply divided between advocates of versions of utilitarian and deontological theories of ethics, emphasizing the difference between the "right and the good" or the "individual and the aggregate." In a number of recent works, however, there has been a renewed interest in a third, neglected alternative: an ethic of virtue of character. By itself, an ethic of character or virtue will not resolve disagreements about assessment between utilitarian administrators and deontological faculty. But it may provide a model for re-examining what assessment means or could mean if properly understood.

An Ethic of Character and a Community of Learning

Unlike utilitarian or deontological modern ethics, which focus exclusively on the evaluation of actions (or of policies governing action), virtue or character ethics *focuses attention on the evaluation of individuals and on evaluation of those practices that produce individuals of certain kinds.* The criteria for evaluation in the case of individuals is value-added; it is the basic capacities of the person relative to some culturally established norm that serve as the baseline for a "mean" to be achieved in the case of that person. Courage, for example, in Homeric

Greece was defined in physical terms as the habitual willingness to risk one's life in combat. In Medieval Europe, courage was seen as a spiritual attribute: the willingness to confront inner forces of evil and temptation. The "mean" in both cases was partially determined by individual circumstances and partly by the different, culturally defined ideals of courage. In educational assessment, initial evaluation of competencies relative to culturally desired goals works in a similar fashion.

Practices, from the perspective of character ethics, are rule-governed, goal defined, coordinated human activities through which persons may achieve excellences intrinsic to the practice, along with extrinsic rewards shared with other practices. Fame is an extrinsic reward that can be achieved by professional athletes, film stars, and political leaders, but the intrinsic excellences achieved through good acting, political leaderships, and team or individual sports achievement differ. The criteria for evaluation, in the case of a practice such as education, should be supplied by those who have been acknowledged by the culture to be expert practitioners. These, presumably, not only understand the importance of the goals or ends peculiar to the practice in question, but also understand the process and means by which those goals can be best achieved within limitations imposed by available resources. This implies that the expert educator, for example, has an understanding of cognitive and moral development that enables her/him to propose the right sort of thing, in the right way, at the right time, relative to the specific needs of the learner.

In both individual and group cases, as Aristotle notes, "the judgement belongs to perception." This means that the educator as moral expert is able to perceive and evaluate the whole of an individual's achievement in ways that cannot be specified in a series of rules or steps. The most important aspects of educational understanding are not something that can be articulated in a series of abstract principles or rules. They must be acquired by practice. On such a model, the closest analogy to good educational performance is the ways in which an art critic or drama critic evaluates a painting or the performance of a play. While it is possible in both cases to give stated criteria for the judgment, in the end it is the cumulative experience of the expert, formed by exposure to many examples of a given type of art, that enable her/him to make an informed, qualitative judgment.

Finally, in a virtue or character perspective, practices do not simply appear as isolated processes. A successful practice is supported by a cultural background of meanings and relationships such as friendships. The excellence of Greek tragedy, for example, was possible not only because specific examples of the type established benchmarks for subsequent excellence. It was also possible because Athenians, for example, embodied their beliefs in Dionysus in a threatre erected in his name, including religious rituals as an aspect of the theatrical performance.

These briefly sketched elements of a character ethic—a value—added understanding of individual excellence, relative to initial capacities and derived cultural norms; an expert based evaluation of practices relative to resources, to culturally defined ends, and to a grasp of processes of development; and an appreciation for the culture specific, community based nature of all practices—are not static, nor are they understood today entirely on the authority of such ancient authors such as Aristotle.

Three recent examples of ethicists inspired by the character/virtue tradition illustrate this point. In *After Virtue*[1] Alasdair MacIntyre initially focused attention on the difference between intrinsic excellences or virtues, and extrinsic rewards that come from achievements within a variety of different practices. Charles Taylor, in *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition"*[2], has shown the importance of extending recognition to the different, embodied identities of individuals and cultures in ways that have strong implications for current debates over the "canon" and the ways in which it is taught. Finally, Joan C. Tronto, in *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for An Ethic of Care*[3] has argued for a moral/political community based on care as a complex process, beginning with attentiveness to the needs of others and proceeding through actual physical work in care giving. Her work has implications, among other things, for current discussions of service learning as a part of academic majors and of general education.

While these contemporary resources suggest the need for a far more extensive argument about the means and ends of education than can be discussed here, one element—the community basis for education—is worthy of emphasis. Faculty who perceive assessment as an externally mandated insult to their competence (and/or as a punitive tool in the hands of a cost-cutting administrator) may be partially accurate. But assessment need not be approached in this way. One of the greatest strengths of American higher education today is also its greatest weakness: the separation of college and university faculty into distinct academic disciplines and sub–disciplines improves some dimensions of individual faculty and student performance, while fragmenting educational community.

Both the proliferation and pace of knowledge require specialization. Faculty dedicated to a discipline and sub–speciality within it are a necessary basis for keeping pace with the expansion of knowledge and for evaluating competent progress in the field. Trained to be self-critical and critical of others, at our best such faculty serve as attentive readers, listeners, and observers of conversations at the "cutting edge" of their specialties, not merely as passive transmitters of information acquired during graduate or professional education. Further, such active involvement is necessary if faculty are to train and prepare the next generation of teacher–scholars to take up the conversation.

The problem with strong disciplinary autonomy is that it often discourages participation in the broader cultural conversation about the ends of education, and fragments what could be a cooperative, caring, teaching–learning community into competing fiefdoms, jealous of each other and interested primarily in departmental and individual survival before the good of the whole. Competition for able students and resources divides those who are already divided by prior graduate training, each believing that her or his background has given her or him a correct understanding of the reality and importance of the object of the discipline unappreciated by others.

The two standard administrative responses to the fragmentation problem—merger of separate disciplines into larger units, or the assignment of discipline trained faculty into smaller, non–discipline specific units—each have their uses. But assessment initiatives offer another alternative: *properly introduced, such initiatives give institutional priority to the recognition of difference among learners; to the need to care for learners as individuals; and to the intrinsic value for faculty of attending to and caring for that difference.* Assessment underlines the professional responsibilities of the faculty *as a whole for all students.*

In most institutions of higher learning, a hierarchy exists in which the most powerful, higher status faculty work with the "best" (i.e., most highly motivated, self–teaching, advanced) students. While such students may be demanding in terms of their interest in understanding the current state of a discipline, they do not pose the teaching challenges of low self-concept, lack of basic skills, or acquired resistance to learning often associated with "problem learners" *and with many "average" students.* Typically, it is low–status, least powerful faculty who are assigned to work with "special needs" students, or to teach large sections of introductory courses. Divisions between "haves" and "have–nots" in a faculty culture duplicate differences between the academically gifted, academically challenged, and academically average.

Given the high resource needs associated with both ends of the standard "bell curve," a wholly egalitarian or "non–elitist" teaching–learning community is not a realistic goal; especially if egalitarianism means a "lowest common denominator" approach to higher education, and "elitism" means recognizing and valuing student and faculty excellence in achievement, relative to some non–individual, culturally established norms. "Elitism," in this sense, will always—and properly—be an integral part of higher learning.

But from a character based ethical perspective, it is realistic, and indeed essential, for all faculty to learn how to listen and actively respond to students who present learning challenges. Joan C. Tronto's description of four stages in an ethic of care provides reasons for this claim. Care, according to Tronto, consists of four phases: *care about, taking care of, care–giving,* and *care–receiving.*

In the first phase, a specific human need is noticed as an appropriate object for response. In the second phase, responsibility is assumed for identifying specific needs and finding possible ways of responding to them. In the third phase, individual care–givers come into direct contact with the objects of care and become involved in work to meet their needs. Finally, in the fourth phase, care–givers note the responses of the objects of care to the way in which care was given and make these responses an integral part of their further care–giving.[4]

As long as important educational needs are not recognized as needs in the moral sense, those who meet them will continue to be segregated into ghettoes within institutions of higher learning. Standard prudential arguments—those that note a "market demand" and then claim that the meeting of such demands by someone within the institution will support the "important" parts of the institution's purpose—miss the moral point: higher ducation's license to serve society implies a shared moral obligation to attend to all sorts and conditions of persons, not merely those we find it attractive to serve. Making such attention an integral part of faculty culture so that responsibility for it is shared is probably the most important aspect of making assessment a priority.

The second phase of care is equally important. Not all human needs can be met by all institutions or by all professions. There is, for example, very little that I can do directly as an education professional to meet the health care needs of my students; and there is probably little that most institutions of higher education (without medical or nursing schools) can do directly to meet such needs. But there is a great deal that education professionals can do indirectly, in areas where health care is minimal or underfunded, or where the populations they serve as educators are not cared for, to make that fact and its possible resolutions part of public discussion. Responsible care implies recognizing what one can and cannot do as a professional and as an institution.

The third and fourth phases will probably be the most controversial for some college faculty. Although "community service" is often part of faculty evaluation, this aspect of evaluation typically focuses on faculty voluntary activity off-campus; activity that may or may not involve direct contact between the educational professional and a human "object" of care. The implications of Tronto's model at this point suggest the importance of every member of a college faculty devoting some time to working with high challenge learners. What one learns from such contact, if nothing else, is an appreciation for the work of those colleagues who specialize in the field. More importantly, one comes to see the importance of one's profession as one observes incremental change in the face of obstacles.

Equally controversial is the importance of paying attention to what students are actually saying about the care they receive. Faculty typically resent what they perceive as undue emphasis on student evaluation of learning, because the evaluation process often uses impersonal instruments, focused on "objective" factors, to evaluate something that is not primarily objective. If what Tronto is saying is correct, then what is needed are not more task forces or educational consultants to produce more accurate objective measures that can be efficiently administered in fifteen minute sessions at the end of each term! What is needed is practical training that enables faculty to pick up and respond to verbal and non-verbal cues in the classroom that indicate successful or failed pedagogy.

Where care becomes central in a faculty culture, one of the anticipated outcomes is a greater sense of shared responsibility for learning without the need to sacrifice faculty autonomy and independence in teaching and research. Simply recognizing basic human educational need as a starting point for morality, and shared professional responsibility for responding competently to that need as the logical consequence of noticing that need, could make a significant difference in faculty discussions of assessment. Assessment of student academic learning is important, on this model, not because it is a prudent response to external pressures, but because it is a central aspect of good, morally attentive and responsive teaching.

Conclusion

The argument presented in these remarks has two main components: a strategy for responding to initial faculty resistance to the insult implied in demands for assessment and to the utilitarian moral bias of the movement; and a positive argument that places the morality of teaching within a care/character ethics. Both are important. The failure to deal truthfully with the unpleasant implications of assessment demands is a contributing factor in faculty resistance to assessment. The failure to deal with assessment as an appropriate moral challenge, rather than as an unpleasant obstacle to be met with obfuscation; a prudential opportunity for increasing one's market share; or a punitive tool for administrative control of faculty, can only increase faculty cynicism about assessment. It is the responsibility of higher education administrators to make a strong moral case for assessment of student learning, based on the ethics of the teaching profession. If this can be done successfully, it might become a basis for increased commitment by faculty to a profession that, like all other professions in a contentious and litigious climate, faces challenges. Such challenges invite moral creativity rather than tactics of blame and obfuscation.

[1] *After Virtue*, 2nd. edition. (Notre Dame, 1984).

[2] *et. al., Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition,"* ed. Amy Gutman (Princeton, 1992).

[3] *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for An Ethic of Care* (Routledge, 1993).

[4] *op. cit.*, pp.105 – 117.

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The Evolution of an Institutional Assessment Model

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Capital University is a four year, liberal arts, Lutheran institution located in Columbus, Ohio. It is organized into four undergraduate units including: College of Arts and Sciences; Conservatory of Music; School of Nursing; and the Adult Degree Program. In addition, two graduate colleges, the Law and Graduate Center, and the Graduate School of Administration offer degrees in law, graduate tax programs, and the master's of business administration. The university offers six undergraduate degrees, five graduate degrees, and more than 30 undergraduate majors to its approximately 3,900 students. Capital began an NCA self-study during 1991–92 and had a team visit in March 1993.

While the basic concept of assessment has long been a part of higher education, most notably in the form of classroom grades, the notion of a practical, institutional model of assessment is a relatively recent one. Current external and internal pressures have led both faculties and administrators to seek a model that not only embodies efficient assessment procedures, but also complements the institutional culture. Unfortunately, many of these searches are not measured, linear marches toward an inevitable end. Instead, they are often best described in terms of false starts, rediscovered ideas, and revised perspectives. Yet, it is only through such an evolutionary process that viable models of assessment can emerge from the institutional culture and ultimately become an integrated part of the educational program. This paper describes the evolution and practical application of an effective institutional assessment model for traditional undergraduates at Capital University, and offers an approach that shows promise for use at similar institutions.

In 1987, Capital University began developing a program for the assessment of a new competency based core curriculum and the general University Mission. It was assumed a well-conceived assessment process would help to empirically verify many of the educational assumptions that were made by the institution. The newly created Assessment Center devised an elaborate model that equated learning with academic, personal, and social growth, and implied that assessment should measure changes in not just academic proficiencies but also in student attitudes and values. Accordingly, four instruments were identified for an Assessment Battery: *Collegiate Academic Achievement Profile* (later the *Academic Profile*), a standardized measure of academic proficiency; *Shipley Institute of Living Scale*, a measure of intellectual ability; *Canfield Learning Style Inventory*, a measure of preferred learning conditions and styles; and the *Jackson Personality Inventory*, a measure of personality traits and styles. The Center then began to administer the Battery to all incoming freshmen and store the data for longitudinal, post-test studies. From this ambitious and perhaps idealistic beginning, the university entered into the first of three phases that would eventually lead to the evolution of an effective, institutional assessment model.

Phase One: A Global, Institutional Perspective

Once the basic assessment procedures were in place, the Assessment Center began to focus on both refining and expanding the scope of the process. One of the first priorities was to develop a method for reporting the results of the assessment measures back to the various campus constituencies. Initially, individualized results of the *Canfield LSI* were distributed and explained to students in a group session during Orientation. While fairly effective, this practice was substantially enhanced when a sophisticated information management system was developed to integrate assessment data with the larger body of university data. The system involved entering the results from the four instruments into an PC data base. At the beginning of the school year, individual student files were then processed for each incoming Freshman. Each file consisted of a custom, computer generated report that described and explained only those Canfield scales that were significant for that student. The report was given to each Freshman and his/her academic advisor at the beginning of the school year along with the student report form from the Academic Profile. With this information, students and their advisors could then make informed decisions about scheduling courses, possibly obtaining general education course waivers, and planning academic programs. For students who had further questions about their results from the Battery, an Individual Summary Form, which included Shipley and Jackson Scale scores, could be generated upon request and reviewed in a personal interview. A further advantage of the information management system was that the PC data base could be uploaded to the university mainframe and imported into the university's student database. Since the campus database was constantly updated and contained extensive demographic fields, assessment data could be easily supplemented for researching complex, administrative questions or downloading back into the PC environment. Such a system readily allowed the Assessment Center to distribute a "White Paper" of descriptive findings about the Freshman class and detailed comparative analyses of the data by majors, colleges, age, etc.

A second consideration was developing a qualitative instrument to corroborate the results of the qualitative assessment data. The Center constructed a survey instrument, *The Student Survey*, that could be administered to both entering and graduating students. Three structured question sets with Likert Scales were designed to provide response data that would allow for statistical analyses. One set posed specific questions about student attitudes and opinions. Two other sets allowed students to create an impressionistic profile of themselves and the institution by responding within a range between opposing pairs of adjectives. A fourth unstructured or open–ended question set was designed to elicit anecdotal responses about the most important things students wanted to learn (or learned), the most important things they wanted to do (or did), and the most important personal changes they wanted to see (or saw) in themselves. Demographic fields were also included to permit an analysis of the results by gender, age, campus, and term. Results from the survey were entered into a database and coded by the date of administration so that future sets of surveys could be added. *The Student Survey* could then be used to supplement reports with qualitatively based data and even used as pre- and post-test measures in longitudinal studies.

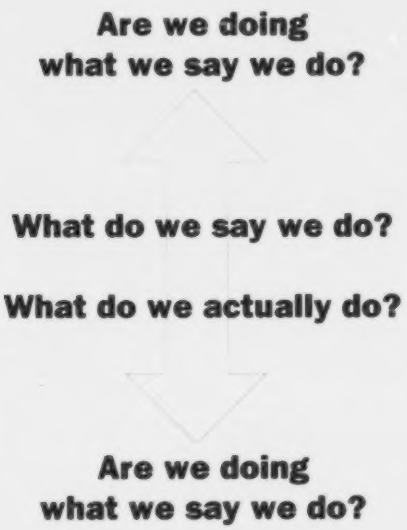
As the culmination of what would be the first phase of assessment at Capital University, the Assessment Center conducted a four-year, longitudinal study of the university mission to empirically validate the assumption that Capital provided "quality" higher education. The basic question was whether the University had been successful in accomplishing it's stated mission for one class of students. This question was operationalized with specific questions derived from the Mission Statement:

- Did Capital provide "quality higher education" as evidenced by enhanced academic proficiencies or student perceptions?
- Did Capital help students "prepare themselves for personally rewarding lives" in terms of careers, relationships, etc.?
- Did Capital graduates exhibit a "strong desire for life long learning?"
- Were the faculty and staff perceived as being "outstanding"? and
- Did graduates exhibit more "mature" attitudes and values?

By statistically comparing the pre and post–test results of the four assessment measures, the study provided the first empirically based answers to institutional questions that had previously been answered intuitively. The claim that Capital provided "quality" higher education was supported by evidence of both enhanced academic proficiencies in reading, writing, math, and critical thinking, and by the self report of favorable student perceptions. The claims that Capital prepared students for "personally rewarding lives" and that graduates would exhibit more "mature" attitudes and values were also supported by significant objective and subjective findings that suggested associated personality and learning style changes occurred over four years. Implicit objective and explicit subjective findings similarly supported the contentions that Capital graduates exhibited a desire for life long learning and that the faculty and staff was perceived as being "outstanding." Based on these answers, it was concluded that Capital University had probably fulfilled much of it's mission for the class involved in the study.

Phase Two: A More Practical Perspective

While the four-year study of the university mission suggested that students were receiving a quality education, the findings could not explain why or how they were doing so. Essentially it was impossible to distinguish between aspects of the institution that were effective and those that might be in need of revision. The fact that the results could not be readily fed back into the educational program underscored the need for a clearly articulated, practical approach to assessment. Since the original conceptual model for assessment was fairly intricate and hard to explain, a new model was adopted that involved only one basic question (Are we doing what we say we do?) and two sub–questions (What do we say we do? and What do we actually do?). In practice, the model equated educational quality or success with doing what the institution claimed to be doing at all levels; from administration to individual classrooms. To determine whether and to what extent this was being done, the assessment process would require all levels of the institution to specify what they claimed to do in terms of measurable mission statements and learning outcomes for departments, majors, and courses. The next step in the process would be to measure what was actually being done with a variety of quantitative and qualitative techniques. Once the information from these measurements was analyzed, the results could be fed back into the educational loop at which time the original question could again be asked. In this way the focus of assessment could be extended down from the global, institutional level to the core curriculum and academic majors, and eventually individual courses and classrooms.


Are we doing what we say we do?
What do we say we do?
What do we actually do?
Are we doing what we say we do?

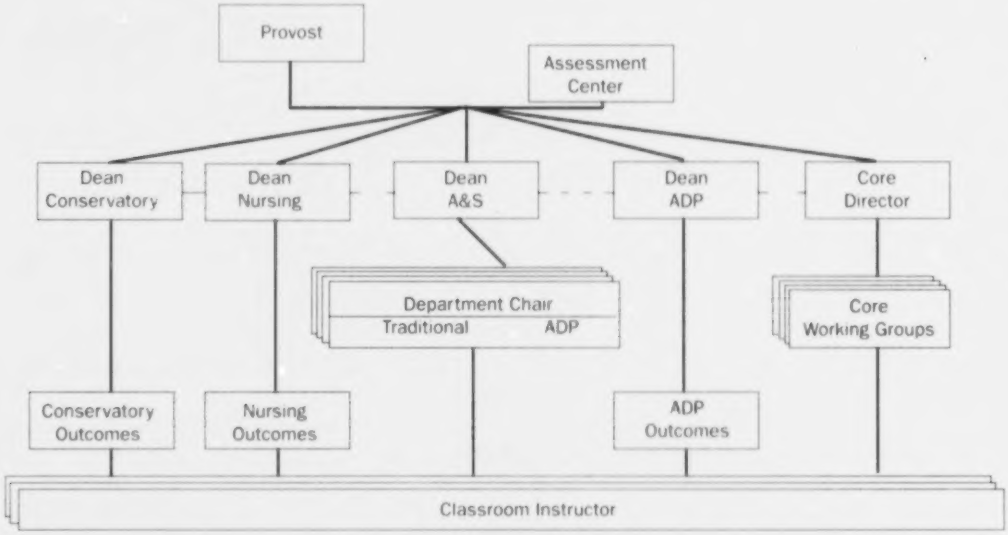
As an important step in operationalizing this model, the Assessment Center received faculty approval to make assessment testing a mandatory part of a student's experience at Capital University. This policy not only eased many of the logistical problems associated with group testing and reporting, but helped to eliminate the possibility of self–selection bias. With all students being represented in the assessment process, the Center also developed a research agenda that would include publication of various aspects of the assessment program, and related studies in such areas as adult/traditional and gender differences in college classrooms.

Pursuing the commitment to a more practical assessment perspective, the Assessment Center developed the general education *Core Assessment Inventory* to evaluate academic achievement in the core curriculum. Each core course committee was asked to contribute 5–10 questions that it felt would be representative of the competencies its students were required to learn. Questions from the committees were compiled into one assessment measure and given to all sophomores as part of a mandatory testing program. The measure was scored and then analyzed by course and item, controlling for students who had actually taken the course. Results from the measure were used to focus faculty attention on both classroom teaching/learning interactions and the type of procedures that could truly measure proficiencies in these courses. Such attention eventually led to an inquiry into classroom assessment and learning outcomes in both the traditional and adult degree programs.

Phase Three: Perspective on Academic Achievement

With a practical plan for assessment already in place and operational, the university confidently prepared for a North Central evaluation. However, in the course of a generally positive visit, the NCA team noted that the assessment plan was not likely to succeed as it did not yet involve all levels of the institution and was not likely to be able to provide data that could readily be fed back into the educational process. The plan to move from a global, institutional level of assessment down through general education, academic departments, majors, and ultimately classrooms was viewed rather skeptically since academic proficiency in areas other than general education had yet to be addressed.

In response to the North Central report, the university first organized a series of informal discussions about assessment with the various academic departments and administrative divisions. Discussion centered on identifying and measuring outcomes in each area. These meetings led to a faculty retreat on the topic of classroom assessment and the development of the first measurable, learning outcome statements for the departments and their majors to be published in the University Bulletin. Another response, designed to integrate the assessment process throughout the institution was the creation of an Assessment Advisory Committee. Composed of the Provost, Academic Deans, Core Curriculum Director, Chairs of Academic Affairs Committee and Undergraduate Faculty, and the Assessment Center, this committee met to discuss problems and determine how assessment could best be implemented theoretically and practically. One of the initial problems that was identified involved the basic assessment model itself. While it tied the measurement and evaluation of learning outcomes directly to the missions of the institution, general education, academic departments, and majors, it was in fact too conceptual. A more procedurally oriented, supplemental model was needed that could place the concept of assessment within the context of the university culture.



While the resulting model resembled a typical institutional flowchart, it could have just as easily been illustrated in a circular, sideways, or even an upside down fashion since the lines represented not power, but the interactive flow of information regarding assessment. In the model, the Provost, Academic Deans, Department Chairs, Core Director, Working Group Chairs, and classroom instructors all shared similar responsibilities at the institutional, department, major, general education, and classroom levels respectively. Specifically, the responsibilities involved defining learning outcomes for the level, establishing measures to determine the extent outcomes have been met, monitoring the results of the measurements, and initiating actions for change based on the results. Additional responsibilities for the Provost included chairing the Assessment Advisory Committee to establish a consistent syllabus format with specified learning outcomes and measurements. Finally, instead of assuming sole responsibility for assessment, the Assessment Center was repositioned to coordinate and provide consulta-

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tion for the assessment of learning outcomes, and administer and evaluate results from the Assessment Battery and evaluate GRE, GMAT, and LSAT testing results to determine the extent institutional outcomes had been met. By adopting this model, Capital University was now poised to fully integrate assessment into the educational process.

Once both conceptual and procedural models were in place, it became clear that assessment must evolve to reflect both the academic and political culture of the institution. The concepts and procedures that have proven to be successful at one institution may have virtually no success at other institutions that are similar in terms of size, location, student profiles, etc. While approaches from other institutions represent excellent starting points, they ultimately must be evaluated, revised, and perhaps replaced to develop a comprehensive approach that will actually be used by the institution. Without such evolution, even the best models risk the fate of being relegated to only the paper on which they are depicted.

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Assessment of Student Academic Achievement: A Case Study of Columbia College's Process and Progress

Caroline Dodge Latta
Joan Erdman
Erie May
Paul Berger

This panel intends to analyze and raise questions about the process by which Columbia College is writing its student learning assessment plan. The process we developed was intended to fulfill the requirements of the North Central Association directive and at the same time reflect the complex and particular institution that Columbia College is today. Participants will be encouraged to ask questions and comment on the process we present.

Our Plan, Your Plan

Plan development for assessing student learning in a college setting is dependent upon both the particular unique qualities of your (and our) institution, and also on the extent to which models can be used as guides to procedures and processes. An open admissions, urban, consumer-sensitive and expanding institution, Columbia College is dependent upon enrollment for the major part of its budget. Awareness of this situation in department as well as in the administrative offices of the college has prompted department chairs and faculty to continuously evaluate their programs and change them to address both new trends and different student needs. Revision of programs, expansion into new programs, surveying student work through portfolios and performance weeks, and developing special sections of courses to address differing pre-college preparation have all resulted from these efforts. In addition, the college combines professional training in arts, media, and communication fields in the context of a liberal education; as our mission states we are educating students to "author the culture of our times." So our departments are often reflective of their subject matter: the general studies departments of liberal education, science and math, English, and computer applications having a more academic ambiance, and the departmental majors partaking of the ethos of their particular subject matter, whether journalism, television, film, radio, management, marketing communication, or theatre, music, and dance.

For these reasons our plan had to adapt existing models to our particular college mission and organization. However, there are parts of the development process that may be useful as models to other student Learning assessment planners. For instance, we found that involvement of the faculty could be encouraged through multiple channels:

- a committee of faculty members from each department chaired by a faculty member, dialogue between committee members and departments regarding their current assessment practices and the formalization of a plan of intended outcomes and assessment methods,
- review of proposed plans by the full faculty including our large part-time faculty component,

- sharing of information periodically with the goal of keeping faculty members apprised of expectations and goals for the plan, etc.

Another area in which our experience provides a model for plan development is in the writing of the plan, which was done by a small contingent of the larger student assessment faculty committee, with revision in executive and full committee meetings, as well as in response to comments after distribution to the full faculty. By following the process that we have analyzed below, you should be able to pick and choose which aspects are useful to you as models, and those that are particular to our, and perhaps other, situations. We certainly would not claim to have the perfect model for developing a plan, but we are impressed and pleased with the value that this process has brought to us as we engage in it. We hope that this is a good sign that the plan, once fully conceived and submitted,will produce continuous efforts to assess and address student learning at Columbia College.

Setting Up the Process

In December 1993, responding to a directive from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Caroline Dodge Latta, Acting Academic Dean at Columbia College, convened a faculty committee to evaluate the assessment of student learning and to develop a comprehensive College-wide student Learning assessment plan for the future.

Members of the Student Learning Assessment Committee included representatives from most of the academic departments and from key administrative units in the College. Primarily faculty, as North Central directs, the committee also included two department chairs, two associate deans, and the acting academic dean.

After reviewing North Central materials, the Student Learning Assessment Committee decided to document assessment methods currently in place in undergraduate departments, programs, and offices, and to this end composed a survey. Each department, with the consultation of a committee member, discussed and reviewed the methods for assessing student learning in their programs and prepared a written response to the questions contained in the survey. While many departments included discussion of the survey in their regular meetings, others consulted through memos and committees. Offices such as Institutional Research responded directly to the Student Learning Assessment Committee.

Documented Traditions

The collective result of the surveys was a body of information that documented College-wide traditions of student learning assessment in academic programs and, to some extent, in student programs. The committee carefully discussed every survey response (twenty-seven in all), learning how important assessment had been in the growth and development of the College and its programs. Four major findings emerged:

- common points existed at which assessment tended to take place, peak times in student paths when learning outcomes were most often sampled;
- similar student learning assessment measures were often employed in more than one department;
- assessment was practiced at the program/department level, primarily, although some types of all College assessment of student learning outcomes did exist; and
- a credible process emerged by means of which assessment results were fed back into the curriculum to effect needed change, thereby ensuring that assessment was not occurring in a vacuum and that change was the result of documentation, not intuition.

Above all, the collation of the survey results indicated that assessment of student learning outcomes is not new to Columbia, and that the College's efforts in this area lend credence and credibility to its future endeavors in this direction.

Towards a Formal Plan

We are now in the second phase of our assessment process. This fall each department, led by a committee member, has generated a departmental list of intended student learning outcomes, picking two or three outcomes to measure, and identifying at least two measures for each chosen outcome. Each department was also required to document the process by which its faculty—full and part-time—identified these outcomes. At the same time the committee is looking to strengthen all-College student learning assessment measures, including data collection, quantitative surveys, and exploration of the creation and/or use of locally developed or already available standardized tests. The final phase will be to put in place an effective College-wide system for tracking departmental and all-College learning assessment initiatives so that feedback from assessment flows easily back into the information loop and change can be effectively measured and gauged, leading to informed decision making and further assessment. The written plan will be submitted to NCA by May 1995.

Analyzing the Process

Although we have yet to submit our final plan to North Central, we feel what we have learned thus far in approaching the process of assessment of student learning is valuable to other institutions embarking on this journey. Our panel will cover such areas as: 1) how to document assessment of student learning that is already occurring on campus, 2) how to ensure high faculty participation, 3) how to engage the cooperation of other College entities who have peripheral input into student learning, 4) how to involve departmental faculty in the process of identifying new outcomes they wish to measure, 5) how to game plan a reporting matrix by which the process of assessment of student learning continues, and 6) how to keep the entire College community from the President and Board of Trustees on down continually informed about this important initiative. Handouts documenting how departmental and College-wide input were solicited and the results of that solicitation will be distributed to clarify the process in which we continue to be actively engaged.

Benefits To Us

Columbia has found the process of student learning assessment to be an enjoyable one. It has deepened our respect for what our colleagues in other departments do and plan on doing with respect to this issue. We have learned much from one another as we struggled to digest and synthesize the enormous amount of information that became available. We feel we have a clearer picture, an overview of a process that has been occurring regularly but informally on our campus for a long time, and that we can now easily construct a framework that formally organizes and institutionalizes these ad hoc procedures. We are pleased to be given the opportunity to share what we have discovered with colleagues outside our institution in the best spirit of collegiality.

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Erie May is a member of the faculty at Columbia College, Chicago, IL.

Paul Berger is Coordinator of Small Business Programs at Columbia College, Chicago, IL.

Departmental Assessment at the Small College

Robert Zwier

Assessment is about student learning. Much of our attention has been directed to assessing progress toward general education goals and objectives, but it is also essential to assess what students learn in their major field. A good assessment program, therefore, should include departmental assessment. This paper relates the experiences—both positive and negative—of one small liberal arts college that has implemented a departmental assessment program as one component of an overall assessment plan. Herein are described lessons we learned that may guide or warn other institutions embarking on this journey.

Small colleges have some unique opportunities and constraints in developing departmental assessment programs. The opportunities come from the fact that most departments have only a small number of majors, so they can perhaps use some relatively labor-intensive methods without too much burden on the faculty. There are also more opportunities in small colleges for departments to work together on assessment. The constraints arise in several areas. For one thing, the small number of majors renders some assessment techniques problemmatic, especially those that allow for or require statistical analysis. In this regard, comparing a handful of majors with national norm groups is risky. Another constraint comes from the fact that it may be more difficult to identify an "assessment advocate" in each department, a strategy that works well in larger units.

These reflections are based on the experience of Northwestern College (Iowa), which is a church-related college of 1,100 students and 62 full-time faculty members. The College's assessment plan was approved by NCA in 1993, and includes a provision that each department will develop and implement its own assessment program for student majors. These plans were developed during the 1993-94 academic year, with implementation beginning in 1994-95. Preliminary plans were submitted to the campus-wide Assessment Committee for review and approval. The departments are quite small, with two or three faculty members and twenty or thirty majors.

Departments were given some guidelines for developing their assessment plans (see Exhibit A). In brief, the departments were asked to identify educational goals for their majors, to identify ways to measure learning (preferably with multiple means of assessment), and to indicate a continuing process by which the department was to analyze the information and make changes in curriculum or educational practices.

Lesson 1

> *Many faculty members do not understand what assessment is, why it is important, and how it can help them in their teaching. There is a need, therefore, for an active program of faculty development as part of building an assessment plan. This faculty development can also have direct benefits for teaching effectiveness.*

Academic administrators have certainly been deluged with assessment materials, but most faculty members have not heard much about assessment through their professional organizations or their professional reading. Consequently, few faculty members have enough knowledge about assessment to begin building an effective departmental program. Furthermore, those who know a little about assessment often have a stereotypical view to which they are strongly resistant (see Lesson 2 below).

For example, is it quite clear from the assessment literature that assessment must begin with establishing educational goals. However, a brief survey of course descriptions and syllabi will demonstrate that many faculty members view education from the perspective of inputs (what will be covered) rather than outcomes (what will be learned). Indeed, one of the more troublesome stages in our experience of departmental assessment came when we asked departments to identify their educational goals. For many departments, this was the first time they had given much thought to articulating the kinds of student learning they desired. A helpful strategy in this regard was to have groups of departments meet together to share their goals, so that those who were uncomfortable with the idea of goals could learn from those who were more adept in this area.

It is critical, therefore, to begin with a faculty development program that outlines the why's and wherefore's of assessment. In other words, institutions must begin building a climate of assessment on campus. Well before there was any talk of an assessment program, the Academic Dean devoted part of several addresses to the faculty and part of several monthly newsletters to the faculty asking questions about the extent and type of student learning. Secondly, we held meetings with each academic cluster (a loose arrangement of related departments) to ask them what kinds of evidence they already gather about student learning. The focus was not on fancy or sophisticated techniques of gathering evidence, but it was on how much evidence is already gathered. Shortly after these cluster meetings, more than a fourth of the faculty attended a regional faculty development workshop on assessment. On the one hand, this proved to be scary for some because there was so much talk about assessment techniques; on the other hand, many were able to relate this new information to the earlier discussions on campus about student learning. Finally, when the time came to develop department assessment plans, either the Academic Dean or the faculty assessment coordinator met individually with most departments to provide direction and respond to preliminary drafts.

It is clear that this faculty development work must continue beyond the development of these assessment plans to their implementation. For example, several departments have indicated an interest in using student portfolios. It is obvious that several departments have not thought very carefully about how to build a portfolio project and how to use this information for the purposes of improvement. We scheduled additional sessions with these departments, looking at how they could develop course assignments that would relate closely to departmental goals and that would demonstrate student growth from the freshmen/sophomore courses to the junior/senior courses. In addition, we discussed how to evaluate portfolios, drawing on the experience of departments (Art, English) that had been using portfolios for several years.

Lesson 2

> *There will be significant faculty resistance to assessment, but there are some effective ways to address this resistance.*

How many faculty members does it take to change a light bulb? Change???

Faculty resistance to assessment will come in several forms. First, many have biased views of assessment to begin with, seeing assessment largely in terms of paper-and-pencil multiple choice tests that may or may not "cover" what faculty members think is important. Second, faculty are (often rightly) resistant to any new labor-intensive projects, especially those imposed by administrators or external agencies. Third, resistance comes from those who argue that the most important educational impacts on students either come years after graduation or do not lend themselves to empirical measurement. Finally, faculty members fear that assessment results will affect promotion and tenure decisions, so that they will be punished for having incompetent or lazy students.

How can we address these concerns? The most important strategy is that assessment, from the very beginning, must be tied in as closely as possible with student learning. It is essential to start with the question of what students learn, both in individual courses and in sequences of courses. Even the most assessment-resistant faculty member will be interested in the extent of student learning, and the vast majority will be interested in efforts to increase that learning. To begin by talking about assessment rather than about student learning is to make a fatal mistake. The "A-word" should be used sparingly, if at all, in the early stages. Even the words we use can trigger anxiety. For example, to relieve the fears of the non-science faculty members, it is better to talk not about gathering data but about gathering evidence.

Another important strategy is to build an assessment program on evidence that is already available and on assignments that already exist in courses. In other words, rather than introducing new tests, new surveys, or new student papers/projects, it is more effective to begin with assignments and tests that already occur, provided that these bear some relationship to course and departmental goals for student learning. For example, some of our meetings with departments have started by looking at syllabi, tests, and paper/project assignments to see how they can be used or modified slightly to develop a pattern of evidence about what students learn. In some instances we have been able to show how a paper assignment in an introductory course could be used in combination with a paper assignment in an upper-level course to assess student growth from freshman to senior year. Faculty members will be much more receptive to making changes in assignments they already use than they will be to creating new assignments or adding assessment techniques that are not course-based.

To relieve faculty fears that assessment will affect faculty evaluations, there are a variety of approaches that can be used. Perhaps the most important is to separate as clearly as possible the evidence gathered from assessment and the evidence gathered for faculty reviews. Assessment results should not be in faculty personnel files, unless the faculty member chooses to submit them. Another strategy is to have different people involved in these two processes. For example, having the Academic Dean on both the assessment committee and the personnel committee could give the wrong message to faculty members. It might also be better to have someone other than the department chairperson coordinating the departmental assessment efforts.

Lesson 3

> *Departments must have significant flexibility to use a variety of assessment measures. In other words, a one-size-fits-all assessment program is neither possible nor desirable.*

Departments differ in their educational goals, and their assessment programs should reflect these differences. Some disciplines are more content-oriented, some are more skill-oriented; some are more theoretical, some more applied, and so forth. To force departments into a common assessment mold will be frustrating and fruitless.

Using some kind of standardized exam (like the GRE) may not work well with some very small departments because the limited number of courses offered in the curriculum may not match the coverage of the test questions. Perhaps only the larger departments, with more comprehensive curricula, should be encouraged to use standardized exams.

Small departments with only a handful of majors will not learn very much from assessment techniques that rely on advanced statistical analysis. On the other hand, small departments can more easily employ labor-intensive approaches such as portfolios and freshman/senior interviews.

Lesson 4

> *Identify an "assessment advocate" in each department or cluster of related departments.*

The literature on organizational change is pretty clear in recommending that top-down changes are less effective than changes that come from within the units themselves. This suggests that Deans, department chairpersons, or institutional research directors should not be the prime movers in the assessment efforts.

An effective strategy will be to identify in each department a faculty member who is or could become sympathetic to assessment and have that person coordinate the efforts. In the case of very small departments where no one is a likely candidate for this honor, perhaps a faculty member from a closely-related department could be identified. In our experience, we did this more effectively in constituting the campus-wide assessment committee than we did in launching department assessment efforts; consequently we ran into some department chairpersons who, like congressional committee chairpersons, ignored the issue or put huge obstacles in the way of departmental progress.

Lesson 5

> *Departments need to avoid the extremes of a minimalist program that won't tell them anything useful and an ambitious program that will be impossible to implement effectively.*

Our experience has been that some departments will try to get by with as little as possible but that other departments will bite off more than they can chew. In general, it seems better to start small and build from there, rather than to embark on an ambitious program that will stretch human and fiscal resources and might endanger whatever good will has been developed toward assessment.

Lesson 6

> *Don't forget the feedback loop.*

One of the more common problems in assessment is that so much effort is focused on gathering evidence of student learning that there is little time or energy for analyzing the evidence and making suggestions for improvement. It is too easy to forget that the primary purpose of assessment is to enhance learning through improvements in curriculum and educational practices.

We have found that departments tend to let the evidence gather dust on the shelves rather than take the time to analyze and make improvements. It is so easy to think that the departments can use the week after graduation to take on this project, but the fatigue factor is high. In some ways the week before school starts in the fall would be better, as faculty members are fresher and they are thinking about learning goals for their students.

The key is to have each department produce a product that will demonstrate that they have reviewed the assessment evidence and have thought about the implications for the curriculum and their pedagogical practices. We have employed a standard form that departments are expected to submit to the Assessment Committee by mid-term of the fall semester in alternate years. The form asks for a description of the information the department gathered, a summary of the analysis of the evidence, and a reflective statement of the implications for curriculum and educational practice.

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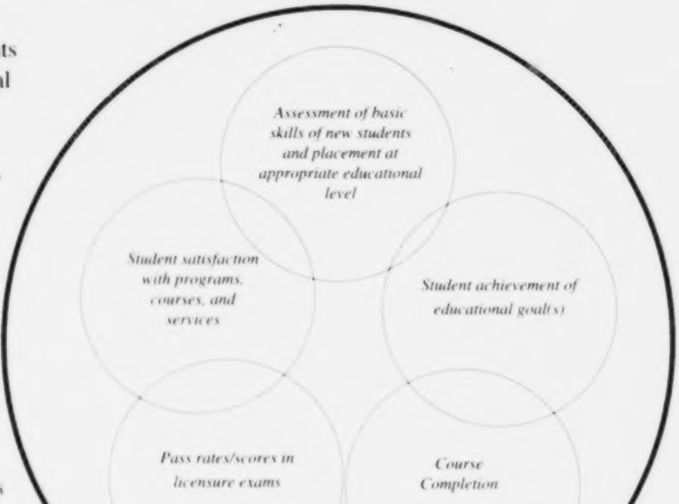
Faculty Design of Assessment Plan

Barb Fischer
Art Marson
Pat Reichenbacher
Dan Wilson

Western Wisconsin Technical College (WWTC) is committed to quality management and a continuous improvement philosophy. This management philosophy is based on the works of Edward Deming and focuses on systems development and systems thinking. It includes greater emphasis on communication and participation by faculty and staff in college-wide decision-making. This emphasis on continuous improvement provided the basis for a very successful accreditation visit by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA). The college was applauded for its successful approach to identifying and measuring institutional effectiveness indicators. In spite of the college's early success in this area, there was a realization that new mandates from NCA relating to identifying and measuring institutional effectiveness and student academic achievement would challenge the college to more closely examine these issues. It led the college to take a leadership position in developing an institutional effectiveness model for the Wisconsin Technical College System, and to the adaptation of this model at the local college level.

A key element in the Institutional Effectiveness Model is the college's Assessment Plan to measure Student Academic Achievement and Satisfaction.

- Assessment of basic skills of new students and placement at appropriate educational level
- Identification of student interests, goals, and needs
- Course completion
- Student grades
- Student satisfaction with programs, courses, and services
- Student completion and graduation rates
- Student achievement of educational goal(s)
- Student knowledge and skills at exit
- Pass rates/scores in licensure exams
- Placement rates/employment success


Assessment of basic skills of new students and placement at appropriate educational level
Student satisfaction with programs, courses, and services
Student achievement of educational goal(s)
Pass rates/scores in licensure exams
Course Completion

Student Achievement and Satisfaction

The development of the college's Assessment Plan was entrusted to a committee consisting primarily of faculty, with the Vice President of Instruction and the Director of Planning, Evaluation and Research as ex-officio members. This committee was appointed in the Fall of 1993 with the expectation it would complete the development of the college's Assessment Plan for submission to NCA by the Spring of 1995.

Consistent with the college's commitment to quality management, five key guidelines were established for the Assessment Plan. The guidelines include:

- Integrate activities whenever possible both within the Wisconsin Technical College System and at the college.
- Use data primarily for our needs and not singularly for outside agencies
- Involve the faculty and staff, along with the Board, President, and administration.
- Focus not only on "Change," but on "Improvement."
- Do not create new processes and activities (data collection) unless required—rather, refine, and improve existing activities.

In order to support the committee and help them be successful in their task, the college made a commitment to release the faculty from their teaching responsibilities for one day per month. This day was designated as a workday during which the committee could work together in an uninterrupted manner. Funding was also identified in the college budget so that adequate resources would be available to support committee activities.

In preparing the WWTC Assessment Plan, the committee identified five goals to achieve. The Assessment Plan should:

- Improve Student Learning
- Encourage Excellence in Teaching
- Improve Curriculum
- Satisfy NCA Requirement
- Provide Accountability to Public and Legislative Bodies

Communication with college faculty and staff, as well as receiving their input and support were important. A first step in the Assessment Plan development process was to convene Divisional meetings to share the project goals and to obtain information and feedback from faculty on their views of assessment and on methods and tools they are currently using or would like to use. Remember that a key guideline was to improve existing activities and not create new ones unless necessary. To get this information, a scannable survey form was designed and all faculty were asked to complete the survey during the Divisional meetings.

Results from the survey indicate that the faculty at WWTC has considerable experience in assessment and most were using some form of assessment for entry to their program or to assess student achievement in their courses. Most popular assessment methods for program entry include ASSET test scores, grades, and/or test-out procedures. Faculty would like to include interviews, standardized pre-tests, and competency checklists as part of the entry assessment process. They did not support using class rank, advanced standing, or referrals.

To measure student academic achievement, the most preferred tools were exams, tests, quizzes, and grading procedures. In addition to these tools, many faculty would like to use a standardized post-test, CAAP test scores, co-op experiences, and/or interviews as measures of academic achievement.

A key question on the survey asked faculty what the college could do to encourage their participation in assessment activities. Three key items identified by the faculty include:

- time to complete assessment activities
- training in use of assessment tools and processes
- computer support

As with most surveys, some of the most useful data come from the written comments on the survey forms. Faculty comments fell into two categories. One was a desire to have a forum to ask questions or to discuss operational and financial questions related to assessment. A second area of comment was a desire to share tools and procedures among the faculty. This desire to share information led the committee to designate an Assessment Day.

The Assessment Day was structured to allow faculty and staff an opportunity to share ideas and assessment methods. Tables were set up in a large conference room for staff to display assessment materials and to discuss them with their colleagues. A roundtable session was held repeatedly throughout the day for staff to talk with the President and other administrators on procedures, budget issues, time allocation, and other issues of concern to them.

A final activity completed by the faculty, through input from the survey and by discussion at in-service sessions, was the establishment of college-wide student outcomes. Faculty and staff had never held cross-unit discussions on expected student outcomes. Agreement on what the college expected their students to achieve had to be established in order for the Assessment Plan to be completed.

The WWTC Assessment Plan has been finalized. Open communication, sharing of ideas, and improving existing procedures and methods have permeated the project. It is anticipated that the Plan will be accepted by NCA and that it will lead to the accomplishment of the goals established at the start of the process by the faculty committee.

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Assessing Student Academic Achievement: One Institution's Experiences

David Swenson
Sharon Souter

Introduction

One of our goals in measuring student academic achievement was to provide a tool that could demonstrate that students were acquiring the skills they needed as they progressed through their courses. Our institution also needed a tool that could be implemented across the institution while remaining flexible enough to accommodate differences between degree programs. As a part of the institution's assessment plan, we will measure academic achievement and progress for general competencies, such as Communication Skills and Critical Thinking Skills.

History of Our Plan

In the Spring of 1992 New Mexico State University at Carlsbad (NMSU–C) underwent an accreditation visit. NCA awarded continuing accreditation connected with a follow–up visit scheduled for the Spring of 1995. In preparation for this focus visit, NMSU–C developed plans and strategies for measuring student academic achievement.

A revision of the Mission and Goals Statement was needed to accurately describe the institution. A group of faculty, staff, administrators, and community stake holders met to develop the rough draft of the new Mission. Then the rest of the faculty, staff, and administration provided recommendations and suggestions to help complete the statement. Once we had the revised Mission and Goals, we had the direction of change outlined for ourselves.

Work on the development of the assessment plan began in the Fall of 1992. Part of our preparation consisted of research, studying what other successful institutions had accomplished in assessment. Representatives from our campus attended conferences on assessment and visited campuses that had been successful in their efforts to measure academic achievement.

One of the first areas where the institution made early progress in developing unified tools was in the development of a standardized syllabus. One of our faculty members spent a summer researching syllabus formats, and presented the results to the faculty as a whole. The faculty met as a whole to consider the elements that should be included in the syllabus, and developed a syllabus format that consists of the following parts:

- Basic course information, including course title and number, name of instructor, office hours, and required textbooks and supplies
- List of topics that the instructor will present.
- List of objectives that the student will accomplish.

- Techniques that would be used to measure the progress of the student.

In order to make the syllabi more uniform, we started to develop our own graduate outcomes describing the general skills that students at NMSU–C would have when they graduate. The faculty devoted several Friday afternoons during the Spring of 1994 to developing the statements and specifications for the graduate outcomes. The result of this effort was to describe nine graduate outcomes that were appropriate for all of the associate degree programs at NMSU–C.

Graduate Outcomes

One of the challenges we faced in developing the graduate outcomes was the fact that NMSU–C offers a wide range of Associate's degrees. We offer degrees for programs ranging from technical skill areas, including Electrical Technology and Welding, to academic programs including the Associate of Arts degree. The generalized graduate outcomes would have to be consistent with the needs of all of these areas, and could not contain the specification of skills that were too specific, or apply only to a one-degree area, such as welding or computer science. In the future we plan to develop more degree specific graduate outcomes that would be used for degree specific programs.

The graduate outcomes that our institution found useful included the following:

I. Effective Communication
II. Problem Solving
III. Critical/Creative Thinking Skills
IV. Awareness of Diverse Cultures
V. Awareness of the Sciences
VI. Collaborative Working Skills
VII. Computational Skills
VIII. Effective and Responsible Interaction in Society
IX. Computer and Information Literacy

For each of these areas the faculty developed a list of competencies that would indicate that the student had acquired the skills of interest. For instance the graduate outcome for Effective Communication might include the acquisition and demonstration of skills for college level reading, writing, listening, and verbal communication.

Measuring Graduate Outcomes

After a list of graduate outcomes was developed, we worked on specifying how the graduate outcomes are currently assessed in our classes. The faculty compiled a list of measures that they use, and the lists of measures were collected institution wide. The standard syllabus format was modified to include a list of graduate outcomes that were satisfied by that particular course. For instance ENGL 111G, Freshman Composition, would contain measures for assessing the achievement of skills in writing. COMM 265G, Principles of Human Communication, would contain measures for assessing achievement of college level listening and public speaking skills. A course might measure how students satisfy or partially satisfy achievement in more than one skill area, if appropriate.

The next step was to develop a table showing what courses satisfied the skills for a specific degree program. These tables are useful to demonstrate that each associate's degree at our college does satisfy the specified skills. It was found that courses at the college might do one of three things in regards to a graduate outcome. A course might **Teach** the outcome, which means that some of the required skills would be acquired in the course, and the course would partially satisfy the graduate outcome. A course could **Emphasize** the graduate outcome, which would mean that the course would complete the required graduate outcome. Finally, a course might **Reinforce** an outcome, which would mean that the course would use a skill that a student had already acquired in a previous course.

In addition to the table, other pages would describe how the skill involved was assessed. These pages would repeat the description present in the syllabi. The following is an example of one of the tables:

Graduate Outcome Satisfaction for the Associates of Applied Science in Computer Information Systems
Emphasis: Computer Science

Graduate Outcomes:

I = Effective Communication
II = Problem Solving
III = Critical/Creative Thinking Skills
IV = Awareness of Diverse Cultures
V = Awareness of the Sciences
VI = Collaborative Working Skills
VII = Computational Skills
VIII = Effective and Responsible Interaction in Society
IX = Computer and Information Literacy

T - Taught	Basic skills for the outcome are taught for the first time.
E - Emphasis	Skills needed to complete the outcome are mastered by the students.
R - Reinforce	Skills that the student has learned are used again in this course.

Core Classes:

Evidence to be collected according to the procedure specified for these classes

COURSE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
COMM 265G	E					E		E	
ENGL 111G	T								E
ENGL 203G	E								
ENGL 218G									
ECON 251G		E	E				E		
ECON 252G									
PSY 201G		T		T	E	T			
SOC 101G							T	T	

DEGREE CLASSES	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
MATH 180							E		
MATH 185							E		
MATH 191							E		
MATH 192									
MATH 279	E								
BCS 210							R		T
BCS 222							R		E
BCS 271	R						R		E
CS 110G							T		T
CS 167							T		T
CS 271		T	T				E		T
CS 272							R		E
CS 273	R					E	R		R
OECS 120									E
OECS 125									E
OECS 210							R		E

During the Fall of 1994, a time line was established identifying which programs would pioneer these techniques and when the other programs would implement these techniques to measure the graduate outcomes. Initially a few of the programs will measure the graduate outcomes. After we have had a few semesters to use the graduate outcomes, we will extend the measurement of graduate outcomes to all of the programs offered at the university.

Future Plans

Our future plans for measuring student academic achievement will include measurement of graduate outcomes that are program specific. For instance, the learning outcomes for a nursing student would include skills that a welding student would not need to learn, and vice versa. Students in these programs are learning things that go beyond the generalized university-wide graduate outcomes. Therefore, programs will need to develop specific student outcomes for program specific learning tasks.

Another plan our institution has for the future is to take what we have learned from developing an assessment plan for academic achievement, and develop assessment tools for the student support programs including the Learning Assistance Center, the library, and the Career Center.

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Structures and Results: Operationalizing Assessment

Philip Keith

The assessment plan at St. Cloud State University has been in development since 1987. The initial impetus came from an NCA accreditation visit in 1987 in which the evaluation team expressed concerns about our general education program's lack of organized monitoring of student learning, and from an effort by the Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board to push assessment. Since then, an assessment process has developed at St. Cloud State under the guidance of a combined faculty-administrative committee operating within the collective bargaining framework for institutional planning and governance, emphasizing faculty ownership, and using assessment for program improvement. The process has been approved and partially implemented, and is operating under a university assessment steering committee and an faculty director of assessment.

The North Central assessment requirement has had the effect of reinforcing the principles of the assessment plan already developed, while shifting our attention (slowly, and somewhat reluctantly) from faculty designing to student learning. The following outline gives information structures through which we are moving into full institutional involvement with assessment.

General Education

- **Documenting:** course description file and data base show how courses are designed to meet specific general education objectives.
- **Surveying:** ongoing survey of general education courses provides information on student perception of how they see general education objectives at work in general education courses.
- **Reviewing:** course revalidation process provides feedback to departments and information to the university community on how courses articulate general education program objectives and how student learning is being enhanced relative to general education program goals.
- **Reporting:** yearly reports on assessment activity, and five-year summary reports monitor improvements and needs in the general education program for the university community.
- **Supplementing:**
    - — Ongoing transcript study monitors course-taking patterns.
    - — Alumni Survey provides information about alumni perception of the importance and usefulness of general education.
    - — Focus Group discussions provide information about student perception of general education program effectiveness.

Major/Minor/Graduate/Licensure Programs

- **Report form and matrix** provides a heuristic mechanism for initiating assessment activity in academic programs.

- **Review of initial assessment plans** provides feedback and suggestions for improving assessment planning.
- **Funding program** activates assessment plans in individual departments.
- **Yearly and five-year reports** from the university assessment steering committee provide information about improvements in assessment planning and program effectiveness, and about institutional and programmatic needs.

Still to be implemented are assessment projects in the following areas:

- **Academic Support Programs.** Learning Resources and Instructional Technology, International Awareness, Multicultural Awareness and Gender Equity, Research and Creative Endeavors.
- **Administrative Functions.** University Administration, Student Life & Social Relations, Community Society Impact.

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Assessment and Strategic Orientation

David A. Spencer

More information is needed at independent colleges about marketing orientation, institutional planning, and the use of outcomes assessment to improve assimilation of assessment techniques and to accelerate the rate of adoption. The use of academic program review and student achievement outcomes assessment information as genuine academic strategies may initiate the vital linkage necessary for effective strategic marketing orientation, assessment, and continuous quality improvement to occur in higher education. Since it began in 1895, the North Central Association (NCA) has demonstrated a successful record of guiding institutional improvement. The Commission has indicated that all affiliated institutions within the region will be expected to make student achievement outcomes assessment a critical component in assessing overall institutional effectiveness.

A research study was conducted to identify the use of findings, conclusions, and recommendations generated by student achievement outcomes assessment processes at NCA-CIHE regionally accredited, independent, baccalaureate and graduate degree-granting colleges and universities. The purpose of the study was to determine whether those assessment practices were incorporated as part of institutional formal planning mechanisms. A secondary investigation attempted to determine whether academic program review and student achievement outcomes assessment processes were considered in conjunction with institutional strategic marketing orientation.

Methods

A non-experimental, descriptive research design using two survey instruments and data supplied by NCA-CIHE was used for this study. College and university presidents were asked to complete one survey, *Views of the President Survey*, with chief marketing officers, or persons assigned primary responsibility for the institutional marketing function, completing the second instrument, *Marketing Index in Higher Education*.

Of the 419 colleges and universities that met the criteria for inclusion in this study, a total of 150 presidents and 139 chief marketing officers participated by completing and returning their instruments. There were a total of 116 colleges and universities where both the president and chief marketing officer were represented.

The presidents were asked to indicate if they had specific types of institutional plans, when the plans were generated, and who in the institution had primary responsibility for each of the types of plans. Institutional planning types included: annual operating/budget, long-range strategic, institutional marketing, outcomes assessment, master facilities, and accreditation plans.

Long-range strategic plans were generated at the majority of the colleges and universities with these plans generated at least every five years. The chief executive officer and chief administrative officers in the colleges and universities had primary responsibility for these plans.

The outcomes assessment plan was generated in the majority of the institutions at various times ranging from "annually" to "at intervals as needed." Twenty percent of the reporting institutions did not have an outcomes assessment plan and had no plans to implement one. The chief academic officer tended to have primary responsibility for this type of plan, with sharing of responsibility for the outcomes assessment plan indicated by many of the presidents.

An accreditation plan was generated by the majority of the institutions, with most completing this plan at intervals in excess of five years or as needed. The chief academic officer was charged with primary responsibility for this plan.

The presidents also were asked to indicate if they employed academic program review and student achievement outcomes assessment practices. They were provided with a list of 10 types of assessment practices and asked to indicate the status of the process and the institutional officer or staff member with primary responsibility for that assessment process.

Persistence studies, academic program review, and student self report were assessment processes that were currently in place at the majority of the institutions included in the study. The majority of the institutions did not plan to adopt longitudinal value added, criterion referenced, or norm referenced tests to their outcomes assessment processes. In most cases, the chief academic officer had primary responsibility for outcomes assessment processes.

The presidents responding to the study also were asked to indicate which of their assessment processes generated findings, conclusions, and recommendations that were used in specific institutional plans. According to the results of their responses, findings, conclusions, and recommendations from persistence studies, student self report, and academic program review were used in operating/budget plans, long-range strategic plans, institutional market plans, and outcomes assessment plans. The findings, conclusions, and recommendations from all of the assessment processes were incorporated into the outcomes assessment plan, but to a lesser extent into the accreditation plan.

Results from this study indicate a simple, yet direct, route to incorporating academic strategy into administrative structure, institutional planning, and a broader marketing orientation is to apply findings, conclusions, and recommendations generated by existing program evaluation processes and methodologies. If existing program evaluation processes and methodologies generate findings, conclusions, and recommendations, this information can be directly linked with established organizational planning and decision making activities. Using findings, conclusions, and recommendations derived from academic strategy in planning and administrative structure may improve program quality, enhance marketing effectiveness, reduce organizational resistance to innovation and change, and enhance the potential for individual and group ownership of this important linkage.

Important information from institutional outcomes assessment initiatives, planning activities, operational processes, and external research is captured and analyzed, but it is often lost within many layers of organizational bureaucracy in colleges and universities. Most post secondary institutions are set-up to manage inputs, costs, and rule promulgation. If they could, instead, adopt a holistic approach that grasps the interrelationships among problems, capture appropriate information for decision making, and manage the information through effective teamwork and technology the organization would function strategically as a single enterprise. By linking organizational strategies with a focus on institutional problems and processes, colleges and universities can make better use of the information generated by outcomes assessment (Kinnick, 1985).

The use of student outcomes information is greatly enhanced when the information can be incorporated into an ongoing institutional process or procedure, such as program review or strategic planning and budgeting, or when it is focused on a particular problem, such as student recruitment or retention. Such linkages can be fostered by the college or university internally, for example by administrative mandate, or by shared recognition of and concern about a current particular program or curriculum. Impetus may also come from outside the organization. (p. 98)

If independent colleges and universities were motivated by internal environmental forces to initiate outcomes assessment programs, the adoption curve might extend over several years. Historically, higher education's approach to improved quality, enrollment growth, and improved financial health have not proven to be significant catalysts for creation of assessment practices. The adoption rate for assessment-type, qualitative accountability has accelerated at independent colleges with new demands now coming from a variety of external, governmental, accreditation, and public sources. Results from a national survey of 118 independent liberal arts colleges and universities, conducted by the Council of Independent Colleges (1993) found 100% of those institutions responding had assessment programs for their majors, with 94% reporting use of assessment results to influence changes on their campuses.

In prior years, activity has been higher in public institutions than in the independents (by 79 to 56 percent in '89); now the two sectors run neck and neck, at 79 percent each, with public two-years at 87 percent. Some 42 percent of reporting institutions say their state requires assessment; over half describe their activity as part of a self-study for a regional accreditation agency. (p. 14)

The focus on the importance of student achievement and institutional outcomes assessment has become even more complicated for accrediting agencies and colleges and universities with the federal government's desire to officially verify effectiveness in post secondary education. The demise of the Council on Post secondary Accreditation, in 1993, has further complicated this situation for regional accrediting agencies and colleges and universities. The federal "Higher Education Act of 1992" seeks to mandate regional accrediting agencies to act as an arm of the federal government to impose further standards of accountability and academic quality, beyond those already established by regional accreditation commissions and the institutions themselves. These governmental regulations and accreditation policy mandated shifts have come at a critical time for higher education as it moves toward formalizing assessment initiatives on campuses.

Regionally accredited independent colleges and universities are faced with the same policy mandates and timetables for adopting assessment practices as their public counterparts. They also have the same opportunity to benefit from the use of assessment results as public institutions within the North Central Association, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education region. They may not, however, be capable of allocating the same types and amounts of human and financial resources to assessment plans and processes as publicly funded institutions.

Faculty and academic leaders having direct responsibility for instructional design and development activities are in the best position to help facilitate improvements in instruction, student learning, and program improvement through outcomes assessment practices and processes. This approach may prove to be the most practical, timely, and cost effective for independent colleges and universities confronted with limited human and financial resources.

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Assessment Data Management in Small, Independent NCA College: A Survey Report

R. W. Stroede

Introduction

In a survey study completed in January of 1994, the researcher sought the perceptions of the chief academic officers (CAOs) of 162 small (full-time equivalent student enrollment of under 1200), independent colleges granting bachelor's degrees and accredited by the North Central Association. Descriptive information was sought on the application of student outcome assessment data to the improvement of programs; those contributing variables that influenced performance; and the status of technological support systems. The study enjoyed a strong 78% return. The responding institutions had a mean enrollment of 723, with a range of 63 to 1193.

Findings provided a profile of the CAOs' perceptions, identified the factors that appeared to have had an impact on those perceptions, and established the characteristics of those colleges in which the CAOs perceived data application to be high.

CAO Perceptions of Assessment Data Application

Findings indicated that assessment development was relatively immature. Most schools had been developing their plans for three years or less. When asked to evaluate the success of their institutions in applying assessment data to the improvement of their educational endeavors, most CAOs found their applications to be minimal. A small minority reported very successful applications: 1% in the improvement of instruction; 4% in the improvement of general education programs; 5% in the improvement of major discipline programs; and 1% in the improvement of student support programs. Consistently more CAOs felt their efforts in these areas to be minimal rather than acceptable. Significantly more CAOs indicated the absence of any application: 10% in the improvement of instruction; 16% in the improvement of general education programs; 8% in the improvement of major discipline programs; and 10% in the improvement of student support programs.

Factors having an Impact on CAO Perceptions

In exploring the relative support of college components, the respondents revealed that 78% of the institutions did not have an office of institutional research; of those who did, more than half reported the office to be minimally helpful or not helpful at all. About 60% of the CAOs had the benefit of an office of information management/ computer services, but more than half evaluated the support as minimally helpful or not helpful at all.

Faculty support was better. More than half of the respondents found faculty very supportive or moderately supportive. Only 3% indicated that faculty were not supportive at all. The CAOs also evaluated the support of their computer technology, splitting quite equally between an evaluation of very good or moderate support and minimal or no support at all.

The use of on-campus inservice and off-campus assessment conference/workshops was also studied. Most institutions (62%) have not held inservices in assessment data application for faculty; even more (90%) have not had such inservices for administrative staff. Most institutions reported that faculty and staff were attending off-campus assessment conference/workshops, though the numbers were low. The majority reported attendance by five or fewer persons over the last three years.

Status of Data Management Systems

Findings on the nature of assessment data management were not encouraging. Fully 75% of the colleges lacked a unified, longitudinal student database, with those institutions using several separate databases. More than 90% did not yet employ a special assessment database. Most institutions recorded input data into a student database (81%), about half entered environmental data, and 43% entered outcome data.

Access to the generations of reports was limited mostly to administration and administrative staff (60% and 43% respectively), with 22% reporting that faculty could access reports. The reports generated were mostly summaries (75%), with spread sheets and statistical analyses being less common. Only 5% of the institutions reported that they could generate prediction models.

High-Rated, Low-Rated College Contrasts

Those respondent colleges whose CAOs reported acceptable or very successful performance (HR) in the application of assessment data to improvement of their colleges contrasted significantly with those reporting minimal or nonexistent application (LR).

Though most (about 45%) colleges in both groups reported that they had been developing their assessment plans for two to three years, no HR institutions reported that they had been developing their plans for less than one year—however, 30% of the HR colleges had been developing plans for more than four years, while only 4% of LR colleges reported such activity.

HR colleges reported that their offices of information management were quite useful in assessment data management. While 47% of the HR colleges evaluated the office's support as moderate, 52% of the LR colleges found their office to be minimally useful, suggesting that the HR colleges had identified and established useful functions for information management operations.

Faculty support contrasted dramatically between these two groups of colleges. While 30% of HR colleges judged faculty to be very supportive, only 3% of LR colleges reported that level. No HR college reported nonsupport but 8% of LR colleges did so. The majority (54%) of HR colleges reported faculty to be moderately supportive while the majority of LR colleges (54%) judged faculty minimally supportive.

Faculty development in the application of assessment data was much more common in HR colleges. More that 67% of the HR colleges reported that such inservice training had been provided in contrast to 33% of LR colleges. Though less administrative training had been provided, the contrast in this area was even more dramatic; only 7% of LR colleges reported such activity while 29% of HR colleges had had administrative training.

Similar to their evaluation of information management support, HR colleges reported that they valued technological support. More than 67% of these colleges judged their technology to be very supportive or moderately supportive; 47% of LR colleges reported that their technological support was minimal or nonexistent.

An examination of the characteristics of the technology supporting data management in these two groups of colleges provided an explanation for the value placed on technology by the HR colleges. In all cases the HR colleges were beginning to employ the technologies that both Ewell and Astin have prescribed in their work. About 10% more HR colleges than LR colleges employed longitudinal databases and could generate multiple base reports. Only 5% of the LR colleges had established assessment databases compared to 21% of HR colleges. More HR colleges were entering input, environmental, and output assessment data into databases than LR colleges. Most significantly, 65% of HR colleges were entering environmental data in contrast to just 36% of LR colleges. The range of campus constituencies able to access data reports at HR colleges was considerably larger than at LR colleges; most significantly, 33% of faculty could access reports at HR colleges compared to only 10% of faculty at LR colleges. The range of data reports that could be generated was much larger at the HR colleges; about twice as many HR colleges as LR colleges could generate summaries, spread sheets, analyses, and charts/graphs. Though few colleges could yet generate prediction models, 17% of colleges reported this ability while no LR college reported such availability.

Conclusion

Only a third of the CAOs participating in this study evaluated their college's performance in assessment application to the improvement of instruction, general education programs, major discipline programs, or student support services to be at an acceptable or very successful level. It appears that the greatest success was in the improvement of major discipline programs, and the least in the improvement of instruction. Faculty support in the application of assessment data appeared to be strong and of considerable importance, but most institutions were not providing the faculty with training in such application.

The study suggested that the lack of sufficient technology to permit the effective storage and manipulation of assessment data was a significant restrictive factor in effective application. Those institutions whose CAOs reported successful application were rapidly developing the essential components of decision support systems.

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An Integrated Process for Managing Institutional Effectiveness

Paul V. Unger
William J. Ivoska

Introduction

As most institutions across the country are facing such challenges as fiscal austerity, increasing pressures for operational accountability, and decreasing enrollments, the need to monitor and provide evidence of institutional productivity has become a major topic of discussion on most college campuses. To further complicate matters, some states, such as Ohio, have proposed for the community and technical colleges that a percentage of institutional funding be based on an institution's ability to meet or exceed certain productivity or service standards. While most institutions have some semblance of planning occurring to proactively address these and other issues, it is usually fragmented, highly complex for most of the college community to utilize, and more of an exercise in futility than synergy.

Owens Community College was facing all of the issues described as well as many other challenges that necessitated a major change in the way the college operated and how the college community monitored the productivity and effectiveness of the institution. This paper provides a brief overview of the problems that Owens Community College faced and the events that led up to the establishment of a pragmatic and integrated process for managing the effectiveness of the institution.

Institutional Overview

Owens Community College (OCC), established in 1965 as a public two-year technical college, was chartered as a public comprehensive community college in 1994 and is located in Toledo, Ohio. Approximately 8,600 students are enrolled on the main campus and 1, 650 students on the Findlay campus. The Findlay campus is located in Findlay, Ohio, approximately 45 miles south of the main campus. This campus is unique in that only the Associate of Applied Science and Business are offered and that all general education is provided by the University of Findlay, a small liberal arts college located adjacent to the campus. The main campus offers the Associate of Arts, the Associate of Science and more than 50 technical degree and certificate programs.

OCC offers a wide array of specialized, credit and non-credit programming through a Center for Development and Training. Programming through the Center is designed to meet the needs of local businesses, industries, and health and public service agencies by providing courses, seminars, workshops and degrees during the day, evening, weekend, off-site, over TV-Owens, and over a full-motion, two-way video and audio, fiber-optic distance learning network.

Background and Challenge

In 1992, strategic initiatives that would direct the future of all public colleges in Ohio, were proposed in a report entitled *Managing for the Future Task Force* released by the governor, and in a subsequent report released by the Ohio Board of Regents in *Securing the Future of Higher Education in Ohio*. These reports indicated that changes needed to occur within the Ohio higher education system that included recommendations related to enhanced access, greater collaboration and partnerships between colleges and business and industry, reduced program duplication and in addition, proposed performance standards that would require two-year colleges to demonstrate institutional effectiveness and productivity. The Regents' report also encouraged all free-standing two-year technical colleges to become chartered as comprehensive community colleges.

Not unlike other communities around the country, the local economic base of part of the OCC service district has changed from that of heavy manufacturing to a more diversified service oriented base. The change in the economic base along with company downsizing and other organizational change has prompted the economic development community to demand not only more, but different kinds of services from the College. The rest of the district encompasses a smaller city that is surrounded by a relatively rural farming community, which unlike Toledo, is characterized by a strong manufacturing economic base and is home for eight Fortune 500 companies. This area of the district presented unique opportunities and challenges that were different from the Toledo market. In 1994, in response to the increasing demand for customized, credit and non-credit business and industrial training and education, the College moved its already mature Center for Development and Training into new 55,000 sq. ft. training facility.

The change from a technical college to a comprehensive community college has spurred enrollment and necessitated the addition of full-time and part-time faculty, the expansion and addition of various academic and non-academic support services, a restructuring of our Arts and Sciences Division, substantial curricular changes, facility renovations and additions, and a shift from a centralized to a more decentralized administrative model. Compounding the evolutionary changes that the College was experiencing were increasing requirements from state and regional agencies for institutional and programmatic accountability. To navigate this changing environment we realized that OCC needed a process or mechanism for monitoring the effectiveness of its operations and thus began to embark on establishing an integrated institutional effectiveness process.

Need for an Integrated Institutional Effectiveness Process

The scenario described above is not unlike that facing many institutions. OCC found itself in a position of accelerated growth, an increasingly complex operating environment, and very few integrated mechanisms for monitoring the effectiveness of college operations. The elements one would expect to find in an institutional effectiveness model either did not exist or were in need of updating to reflect the the OCC's preferred operating environment.

Without describing the process that the College undertook to develop the institutional effectiveness process, a model was developed that utilized several existing monitoring tools, newly developed tools, and a conceptual framework for integrating all of the elements. The process is basically divided into four essential cycles. Beginning with a Strategic Planning Cycle the College's mission and purpose statements are reviewed, the internal and external environments are analyzed, and institutional strategic initiatives are developed. Next, in the Operational Planning Cycle, data that are gathered through the program review and evaluation process, outcomes assessment and support services review and evaluation is utilized to develop action plans. In the Resource Allocation Cycle, department and division operating plan elements are linked to rescue distribution which includes people, money, equipment and facilities. Finally, an Evaluation Cycle provides for changes to be made to any part of the institutional effectiveness process between planning cycles. In addition, it allows for the entire process to be reviewed and evaluated on a periodic basis.

One of the most challenging aspects of the development of the institutional effectiveness process was to determine how all of the elements would be integrated. Much discussion ensued around the campus concerning what integration meant. Another challenge was to determine how a process could be developed that would actually be utilized by the campus community and not simply be a model or process that existed only on paper. While most of the campus community was enthused about the new process that was emerging, the skeptics still viewed it as something that will pass in time. Although we are only in the second year of the process, it has been well accepted by the campus community, seems to be pragmatic enough so that all departments and divisions within the College are able to utlize it, and we have not encountered any major hurdles to this point. As we continue to move through the new process we are making minor formative changes so that it continues to be flexible enough to accomodate the constantly changing environment in which we operate.

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Chapter VIII

Focus on Criterion Four

Using Self-Study Experience to Focus Institutional Change: Eight Years of Improvement at the University of Arkansas

Daniel E. Ferritor
Nancy E. Talburt

In 1986, the NCA team visit and report to the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, was the culmination of a committed institution-wide effort in self-study, analysis, and planning. A key element of the Self-Study Report was the identification of recommendations for improvement in virtually every area of the institution. From the perspective of 1994, it is possible to list more than two dozen major institutional improvements related to the NCA accreditation process.

The session supported by this paper will focus on two areas: 1) ways in which the self-study process provided information and impetus toward change and 2) changes that were initiated, including those that worked, and some that didn't, to bring about institutional improvement.

Organizational change is something of an oxymoron. It is the nature of an organization, especially a large one, to rely heavily on its structure, its policies, its rules, and its regulations (in fact, its inertial force) to assure that it accomplishes its goals. The task of socializing the members of any organization is far from easy. To ask that the members of the organization all work together to accomplish its mission is difficult enough. To ask that they do this and be encouraged to experiment with and to accept major change is a very tall order indeed. Therefore, it is not unusual that the professional literature has focused so long and with such depth on the nature of organizational change. Questions about how and why change occurs, and how to institutionalize change, are not new.

In the presentation for which this paper supplies background, we will describe a history of change in one organization, the University of Arkansas, focusing on changes that we believe strengthened the institution considerably. It is a history of change which includes change in values, in beliefs, and in the behavior of University faculty and how they perceive their role as classroom teachers, particularly in the lower division undergraduate classes. It is a history of change that includes change in the behavior of administrators, staff, and students as well. To track this process we will provide a historical view of the period and will talk not only about the successful paths we have traveled but also about some of the cul-de-sacs. We hope that others will be able to learn from our journey, not just what worked and didn't work, but what processes seemed to promote change and why, and what processes seemed not to promote change and why. Finally, and most important in any discussion of change, we hope to show what factors led to the institutionalization of certain changes.

We have in our journey learned much about ourselves and what we need to do. We know that institutions today need to change with the curve (or ahead of it) to be able to continue to redefine their individual missions, to live within their budgets, and to answer honestly the increasingly searching questions of their constituencies. To keep moving, they need many sources of stimulation. Conducting a comprehensive and thoughtful self-study can have continuing results and provide catalysts and bases for necessary changes that affect the entire institution. To ensure that the changes result in lasting improvement and become part of the fabric of the institution requires the broad involvement of faculty, chairpersons, deans, directors, and central administrators, as well as the active participation of staff and students.

Listed below are examples of changes and accomplishments that will be used to illustrate the change process at the University of Arkansas:

- **Special Advising Efforts and Awards begun** (mid-1980's). Colleges and schools initiated different advising efforts and awards.
- **Teaching Academy established** (1987-88). Faculty honored for teaching were appointed founding members in the University Teaching Academy with a charter to initiate activities in support of teaching.
- **Teaching Workshop** (John Gardner, January of 1989). About 200 faculty responded enthusiastically to information about the special needs of freshmen and how to meet them, especially in the form of core courses.
- **Committee to Study the Freshman Year Experience** (Spring of 1989). Identifying needs and possibilities, the report stimulated more talk than action at first, but led to the development of a special course for first year students.
- **Teaching Equipment and Laboratory Enhancement Fees Instituted** (1990). Dedicated school and college fees, related to discipline costs, were established to support purchase and continued updating of teaching equipment.
- **Employment of Noel/Levitz for Consultation** (1991). Expert advice was sought to provide guidelines for needing needs identified by earlier studies, including emphasis on retention of able and well-prepared students.
- **Elimination of Math Test from Summer Orientation** (Summer of 1991). Extensive study established that math placement could effectively be done on the basis of scores on the enhanced ACT test, without additional testing.
- **Freshman Scholars' Seminar Initiated** (Fall of 1991). The FSS focused on high ability students, used an interdisciplinary essay collection as one text, and provoked unexpected campus discussion and faculty development.
- **Teaching Academy Initiatives** (1991-92). The Teaching Academy, established in 1988, became active, funding development grants, sponsoring a poster session, and recognizing Joint research.
- **High-Tech Classroom Development** (1991 to present). Large lecture halls were equipped with advanced teaching technology.
- **Syracuse Survey and Forum** (1991-1992). A conference speaker sparked interest in the Syracuse study of perceptions regarding teaching and research. A similar survey administered on the UA in the fall was followed by a campus forum to discuss the results.
- **Recruitment and Retention Division Formed** (1991). Admissions, Student Financial Aid, and Institutional Research were grouped and put under the direction of the Executive Vice Chancellor.
- **University Advancement Recognized by CASE** (1992). Our effort was identified as the best fundraising program for research universities (1992).
- **Multi-Media Computing Center for Academic Research Established** (1992). Teachers requested media support to videotape student presentations and other teaching aids, stimulating the establishment of a center to support development of teaching technology.

- **Focus on Teaching Group Convened** (Spring of 1992). Chancellor, vice chancellor, deans, chairpersons,and Teaching Academy members met off campus for a day and a half to plan teaching improvement and support.

- **Spring International Brought to Campus** (Fall of 1992). To support non-native speakers of English and improve their teaching abilities, UA contracted with a private school to offer their programs on campus.

- ***Teaching at the University*** published by the Teaching Academy (Fall of 1992). An extensive and practical handbook on teaching was developed using ideas from many campuses and modeled on a handbook first developed for teaching assistants.

- **Teaching and Faculty Support Center Established** (Fall of 1992). An unusual directorship of three recognized faculty initiated many successful programs of support and development, including special workshops, a newsletter, luncheons, focus groups, and a mentoring and portfolio development program.

- **InfoLinks Automates University Libraries** (1993). Faculty and students can review library holdings from their own computers, and other library functions are also automated

- **Transition Program and New Admissions Standards Implemented** (Fall of 1993). To ameliorate the effects of more demanding admissions requirements, a transition status was designed for conditional admits and provided special advising support.

- **New Core Courses Implemented in College of Agriculture and Home Economics** (Fall of 1993). Former FSS teachers led in the design of new interdisciplinary required core courses.

- **State Funding Granted for Math Tutorial Center** (Fall of 1993). State funding supported an expansion of the math tutoring program, with a full-time director and increased space and materials.

- **Back to Basics: Funding Allocated to Improve Freshman and Sophomore Learning** (1993-94). $42,000 was awarded to improve undergraduate instruction by reducing class sizes and provide leadership in discipline-specific pedagogical research and teaching.

- **New Policy Statement Voiced for Graduate School** (1994). Institution focus is on only that research that involves students.

- **Teaching Expectations Made Explicit in Planning Documents** (Spring of 1994). Working group drafts explicit strategies and action plans to implement campus priorities, including specific and more far reaching expectations for teaching.

- **Baum Endowment for Teaching Support Granted** (Spring of 1994). The Foundation funded teaching support activities with three million dollar endowment.

- **Unit Registration and Peer Support Designed** (Fall of 1994). A program for incoming students was funded by the state for the fall, grouping students in common classes and providing special mentoring.The project is an outgrowth of the Fulbright College Task Force on Freshmen Courses.

- **Transition Network Teams Created** (Fall of 1994). In this program introduced this fall, upper-level U of A students made a commitment to assisting first-year University of Arkansas students with their transition to the collegiate environment.

Summary Achievements

- Alumni Association Membership Grows From 11,053 in 1988 to 19,012 in 1994

- Alumni Association Active Chapters Grow From 7 in 1988 to 35 in 1994

- Funded Research Grows From 21 million in 1990 to 45 million in 1994
- Private Gifts Grow From $3,342,058 in 1990 to $43,550,058 in 1994
- Endowment Assets Grow From 27 million in 1989 to 78 million in 1994
- Facilities Improvements Accelerate. Since the last NCA visit, UA has added a total of 1,463,600 new or fully remodeled square feet of space to the campus (25% of the total), and has established a plan for financing routine maintenance operations.
- Computing Facilities Improved. Since the last NCA visit, UA has developed a full network of distributed computing; 8,000 (of 14,500) students have computer accounts, and most library functions have been automated.
- Financial Systems Improved. Since the last NCA visit, UA has completed a new system and added a financial management analysis function, and an even more effective system incorporating additional automation is being installed over the next two years.
- Administrative and structural changes made since 1986. Add professional focus in University Relations, Government Relations, Graduate and Research Programs, University Advancement, and Enrollment Management.

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Linking the Self-Study and Strategic Planning at Kent State University

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Introduction

In fiscal years 1993 and 1994, Kent State University was involved in the self-study process for continued accreditation by the North Central Association and, in the spring of 1993, was also required by the Ohio Board of Regents to prepare a strategic plan (called a functional mission statement). Thus throughout the 1993-1994 academic year, Kent State University was simultaneously preparing a university-wide strategic plan and a self-study for an April 1994 site visitation by the North Central Association evaluation team. Completion of the *Kent State University Strategic Plan* and the *NCA Self-Study Report*, and the subsequent favorable NCA evaluation, were milestones for the University for the 1993-94 academic year. During and since the 1993-94 academic year, the University has achieved a number of the goals and major initiatives articulated in the strategic plan and self-study. To illustrate, the University was classified as a Carnegie Research II institution at about the time the NCA evaluation team visited its campuses, capping a ten-year effort. As a result of the good work of countless numbers of students, staff, and faculty at all eight of its campuses, the University has also prepared an enrollment management plan; increased support and recognition of teaching; developed a consortium Ph.D. proposal in nursing with the University of Akron; increased emphasis on program focus and consolidation within colleges, schools, and departments; and continued the planning for and development of more electronic linkages among units including interactive video connections for instruction among all eight campuses. The connections, junctures, and congruencies among these initiatives and their related documents were all elements contributing to comprehensive planning within the University.

Establishing the Process

The extensive NCA reaffirmation of accreditation effort began in 1992 with staff attending the NCA Annual Meeting, the completion of a *Self-Study Manual* (October 1992) that guided the self-study process, and the formulation of the *Self-Study Report* (January 1994). A broadly-based, thirty member self-study steering committee was appointed by the provost to guide the development of the *Self-Study Manual* and the planning for the evaluation visit. As a part of the self-study process, the co-chairs of the self-study attended the 1993 NCA Annual Meeting. Early in the process, virtually all sectors of the University prepared unit self-studies, which became essential source materials for the University-level self-study.

The strategic planning process began in late summer of 1993 with the formulation of a forty-three person Committee for University Strategic Planning (CUSP), which was chaired by the provost. Departments, schools, colleges, regional campuses, and other major divisional units were all involved. A comprehensive draft plan based in part upon input from unit strategic plans, was circulated throughout the University community in December of 1993, and underwent revisions during January of 1994. The comprehensive plan was endorsed by the Faculty Senate and approved by the Board of Trustees as the University's response to the mandate of the Ohio

Board of Regents that each public college or university develop a functional mission statement. The process was intentionally very inclusive and built upon the revised *Kent State University Mission Statement* and the *Kent Institutional Characteristics* statement, both major defining documents of the University that had been previously approved in the 1992-1993 academic year.

Because of the Ohio Board of Regents-mandated accelerated calendar, the strategic plan was developed in just seven months. Nonetheless, the strategic plan is reasonably specific and charts overall directions for Kent State University into the next century. Although some faculty ultimately felt that they were asked to endorse an already finished document, the strategic plan did incorporate significant university-wide input. The final version of the strategic plan has been widely distributed, and a sense of ownership is growing, in part because goals and initiatives appearing in it are repeatedly referenced by the president and provost, and because it is serving as the main reference point for major funding decisions.

Complementary Nature of the Processes

Two broadly representative committees were constituted to complete the two major tasks: the development of the self-study and the strategic plan. The Self-Study Steering Committee (30 members) and the Committee for University Strategic Planning (43 members) had approximately one-third overlapping membership to assure conformity of agendas and directions, and consistency in outcomes.

With representation from the University's Board of Trustees on both the Self-Study Steering Committee and CUSP, as well as representation from central administration, deans, chairs, faculty, and students, the directions set in the self-study and strategic planning processes were both compatible and complementary, and widely supported. Drafts of the strategic plan (November 1993) and self-study (January 1994) were distributed to all units, and solicitations for input were widely circulated. Many corrections of fact, and suggestions for change were sent to the respective editorial committees. Early input from the president (both documents) and provost (the self-study) as well as from other executive officers was sought, and many editorial suggestions were incorporated. Broad-based involvement was a characteristic of both processes and included town meeting types of forums for clusters of academic units and student leaders.

Differences between the Processes

The self-study effort focused attention on the University's mission, the adequacy of resources for operating an institution of higher education, student learning outcomes, planning efforts and outcomes since 1984, and the integrity of the operations of the institution in the context of its mission. The self-study caused reflection on achievements since 1984 and how the directions of the University should be altered to enter a future of changing demographics, changing economic bases, and increased dependence on information technology.

The strategic plan is the main direction setting document for the remainder of the decade and as such, reflected less on achievements since 1984. It is also the University's response to external mandates from state government as well as an internal guidance document. As a three-to-five year direction setting document, the strategic plan is less comprehensive than the self-study and more action oriented. Because the strategic plan is thought to be more directly connected to annual planning and resource allocation, the process resulting in its approval was somewhat more politically charged than the longer, more stately self-study process. In this regard, the shape of the final version of the strategic plan has probably been more affected by the politics of planning and resource allocation than the final shape of the self-study.

Differences notwithstanding, the recommendations in the self-study and the goals, objectives, and major initiatives in the strategic plan are either mutually reinforcing or congruent.

Influence on University Priorities

The *Kent State University Strategic Plan* has become the preeminent document in setting the tone and direction for the institution for the remainder of this century and in guiding annual planning and resource allocations. To illustrate, when the president discussed in her annual *State of the University Address* her aspirations for the institution for the 1994-95 academic year, the goals she highlighted came directly from the strategic plan. When the provost published his annual fall 1994 *Provost's Update*, he provided additional detail to the goals articulated by the president in her address, and repeatedly referenced the strategic plan. And both the president and provost noted that their common goals for the academic year essentially appeared in the *Self-Study Report* as recommendations, thereby obligating the University to follow up on the recommendations as a part of the favorable NCA reaffirmation of accreditation process.

Spring 1995 Status

With the need to develop a limited number of new programs as well as the certainty of increased costs and diminished resources, setting major priorities is essential for Kent State University. Even without the mandate from the Ohio Board of Regents, strategic planning was in the works for the University, although it would have proceeded at a somewhat less accelerated pace (concluding in late March instead of late January of 1994). The directions set in the *Self-Study Report* and the *Kent State University Strategic Plan*, and the goals appearing in these two defining documents, have been major elements in clarifying and focusing the directions of a large, complex university, and as such have become stabilizing influences in the operation of the institution during times of constrained resources.

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Merging Initiatives and Maximizing Excellence: How to Use the Self-Study as a Springboard for Strategic Planning, Participatory Governance, and Institutional Effectiveness

Adrian Lorbetske
Lynn Priddy Rozumalski

At a small college, most staff members must wear many hats. They also must strive to derive the maximum benefit from every task they undertake. The larger the task, the more important it is to ensure that the work will yield multiple benefits. It was with this consciousness that Nicolet College began the self-study process in the spring of 1992.

A Commitment to Using the Self-Study for Institutional Improvement

Initially, and repeatedly throughout the self-study process, the Self-Study Coordinator and the President articulated an institutional commitment to use the self-study process primarily for institutional improvement and secondarily for continued accreditation. Adherence to that commitment meant that all College staff would be involved and would not view themselves or each other through rose-colored glasses. Rather the self-study would produce and communicate widely honest reports about strengths and weaknesses, about opportunities and barriers, about integrity in relationships and practices. Further, self-study would be a call to action to address weaknesses, confront barriers, build on strengths, and take advantage of opportunities. "Proactive change" became words to live by.

Infusing the Self-Study into Governance and Administrative Structures

Whenever possible, the participatory governance structures, administrative structures, and committees already in place were used to reduce self-study work load. In fact, the self-study was folded in as a task force of the College Council, which assisted by providing the communication pipelines for all actions, by providing updates to the self-study reports, by providing broad forums for interviews, and by providing data on progress made on self-study issues via actions on strategic planning goals.

As the self-study process identified areas where change was advisable, these same structures and committees were also used to help bring about the change. For example, the self-study process identified multiple concerns in communication and decision-making. As a result a governance and communication committee developed and implemented the participatory governance structure that linked all constituent groups on campus, tied administrative structures to committee structures, and provided a forum for proactive change on institutional and divisional issues. It is this same structure that later enveloped the work of the self-study and became the mouthpiece for self-study and the avenue for consensus decisions, clear communication, and timely action on red-flag (institution-wide) concerns identified by the Self-Study Steering Committee.

Linking the Self-Study to Strategic Planning, Mission, Vision, and Values

The College began a comprehensive planning process in the spring of 1993, about one year after the commencement of the self-study process. At every stage in the strategic planning process, information from the self-study was conscientiously considered and cross-referenced through the strategic goals. Red-flag concerns, known accomplishments, and opportunities for excellence that were identified through the self-study became part of the environmental scan data. As strategic planning goals were developed, they were frequently evaluated against concerns, accomplishments, and opportunities. At an even more concrete level, self-study conclusions and recommendations were assimilated into specific action plans for achievement of the strategic goals.

As a result, the College has been able to measure progress on self-study issues and concerns through actions taken toward fulfillment of strategic planning goals. Further, the Steering Committee in conjunction with the College Council merged the self-study and strategic planning processes on a higher plane by measuring the actions taken against the stated standards in the institution's mission, vision, and values. This broader evaluation has served as the final indicators of integrity in practice and relationship at the institution-wide level.

Using the Self-Study to Establish a Foundation for Institutional Effectiveness

As part of the self-study process, exhaustive research was done on every area of the institution and thorough reports were prepared on every area of the institution. These reports include a wealth of information that will provide the basis for improvement. Furthermore, the process itself has set a pattern for grassroots identification of strengths and weaknesses, goal-setting, and proactive change. As a result of the self-study process, College staff became knowledgeable about the principles of quality and effectiveness. In effect, a properly-done self-study does not end—rather, it smoothly moves the institution into the practice of institutional effectiveness!

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Strategic Planning: A Participative Model

Don Weimer
Peter M. Jonas

In this era of reduced budgets, increasing competition, and growing questions about the value of higher education, the need for strategic planning has become more important than ever. The discipline and basic components of strategic planning are beginning to be documented in the academic literature while institutions of higher education have started to embrace the concept. While every institution is unique, strategic planning adheres to several basic important guidelines. Successful planning models depend on the emphasis and organization of the particular steps. Moreover, using the past to build for the future preserves the history and integrity of the institution. In addition, full participation and communication by members of the community serve as a uniting force within the process. Strategic planning transforms the basic fabric of the organization by opening lines of communication for decision-making and allowing greater participation in planning for the future of the institution.

Introduction

Strategic planning embraces the fact that the past has a conflict with the future and this creates the present. Nothing creative happens until energy is forced into it. These two ideas are united when strategic planning is used to leverage an organization. Strategic planning is a freeing agent, producing a release of energy that will either dissipate or be controlled to be creative. Controlling the planning process once it has started is just as important as developing it initially.

A process involving comprehensive participation by the college community is difficult to enact and control. It must not be developed as just another process within an organization already burdened with too many processes. Successful strategic planning must become part of the every day working environment and structure of the institution. This is a slow transformation but to be truly effective, strategic planning must become ingrained in the decision-making system of the institution, the budget process, goal setting, and departmental planning.

Strategic planning redefines what is realistic. Therefore, leaders, not managers, must lead strategic planning. They must be chosen through internal support systems and not simply assigned to this task. These are key elements when opting for a participative process.

Strategic Planning

Five principles (Assumptions) of participatory style:

- The person doing the job is the expert. The person is responsible to the institution and there is reciprocity, the institution is responsible to the person.
- That which is strategic must be validated by the operation; anything that is operational must have a strategic content. Strategies must be developed before a participatory style is possible.

- Accountability, authority, and information are always equal and proceed in that order. The person accountable for a task has the authority (resources), and will provide the information.

- No one can participate in decision-making outside of his/her area of accountability, authority, or information.

- Decisions should be made at the point of action. Accountability is not shared, although different levels of accountability may be assigned.

Strategic planning is a continuous process. While there is no appeal procedure in strategic planning there is self-correction. When a decision is made, the system supports it, placing all resources and information at the disposal of decision makers. In addition, the administration must support strategic planning or it will not be successful. A failed attempt at strategic planning will create so much cynicism that it will be a long time before support exists for another attempt at planning.

Types of Planning: How to Start

Strategic planning is not the answer to all the problems within an institution. In fact, strategic planning works most efficiently when it is implemented during of times of stability. This proactive approach will prove to be valuable during times of crises. In addition, strategic planning should also be implemented in conjunction with other methods of planning, including the following:

- Long-range planning—start with environmental scanning
- Program planning—start with task identification
- Comprehensive planning—start with the budget
- Strategic planning—define common values

Strategic Planning: The Discipline and Process

In strategic planning the process and the discipline are two different entities. The basic elements listed below comprise the strategic planning discipline. The process is the full implementation and specific ordering of the strategic planning steps. A strategic plan will only remain a piece of paper until it is implemented into the classroom. The process is the strength of the plan. With strategic planning the most trouble, as well as most success, occurs after the plan has been developed and implementation takes place. (This is where the vision becomes a reality).

Strategic Planning Discipline

- **Preparation and Communication.** There are two phases necessary in the early stages of strategic planning: preparation and communication. The college community must be active participants in the development of any strategic planning process. This obviously promotes ownership but it also helps everyone understand the system while becoming acquainted with the definitions and overall procedures.Moreover, this process of communication helps build support and prepares the community for the work to come. This is a vital step and should not be minimized.

- **Collect data—Internal/external Analysis.** An important early step is the evaluation of the current sstate of affairs. The process of examining the external environment (expert analysis and environmental scanning) and internal environment (assessment and institutional research) should produce an in-depth analysis utilizing the expertise of a multiplicity of individuals and comprehensive measures.

- **Select the Planning Team.** A Planning Team is selected based on a combination of roles and characteristics of individuals. A matrix method of determining individuals on the Planning Team is a good way of selecting the team members. One axis of the matrix contains the various roles (student, faculty, dean, parent, alumni, etc.) and the other axis contains the characteristics (male/female, traditional age/older student, white/non-white, etc.). The Planning Team is chosen to represent the entire college, not specific interest groups, but is intended to reflect different perspectives within the college.

- **Conduct first planning session.** At a two- or three-day retreat, this group will work intensely to develop a set of core beliefs, a working mission statement and a set of parameters, conduct internal and external analyses, an analysis of the competition, an organizational critique, define the critical issues, formulate objectives, and design strategies to meet those objectives. These components comprise the basis of the draft strategic plan. This process is common to all forms of strategic planning, what differs is the involvement of diverse members of the community.

- **Communicate Draft Plan.** The result of the planning retreat is formulated into a document and distributed to the entire college community. As in the initial stages of communication, the facilitators disseminate this document as widely as possible. The facilitators continue to explain further the process and serve as sources of information while answering questions.

- **Action Plan Teams.** The Planning Team discussed above formulates the vision of what the college will become. Concrete action steps are necessary to make the vision a reality. The bridge between the vision and the reality is a set of Action Plans developed by the Action Teams, one organized around each of the strategies. Every Action Team is composed of members from all areas of the college and community, experts in their fields and responsible for daily operations related to the strategies. The Action Teams are charged with the mission of formulating plans to carry out the strategies. Specific steps for each Action Plan are identified, along with cost-benefit analyses.

- **Conduct second planning session.** The Planning Team reconvenes at a second retreat to review the Action Plans. Options available to the team are to accept, reject, or send back the plans to the Action Teams for more information or revisions. The plans returned to the Action Teams for revision are reviewed at a third Planning Team retreat, where they are accepted or rejected. The Planning Team then prioritizes the Action Plans.

- **Prepare the summary plan for Board of Trustees approval.** In the final analysis, the leadership of the college is responsible for the functioning of the institution and must approve or reject the strategic plan. The strategic plan is presented with full financial disclosure at this time.

- **Implementation.** After the plans are decided upon and prioritized, a series of Job Accountability workshops are conducted, where the work of each plan is assigned to individuals who are then held accountable for their completion. This process is done vertically and horizontally within the institution, bringing the functions of the individuals in line with the goals of the strategic plan. This is a crucial step that sees the full realization of strategic planning.

- **Annual updates.** The plan is established for a five-year period, and the Planning Team convenes on an annual basis, reviewing the progress of the plans and making adjustments as necessary in a process of continuous improvement. The planning process becomes a transformation of the college. Planning becomes tied to the accountability of the individuals and the departments, and becomes the driving force behind the budget process.

This form of strategic planning is a comprehensive and truly participative process. It is related directly to the mission of the college while being associated with the yearly goals. It has led to improved institutional effectiveness and worked to ensure that the college will continue to achieve its goals while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

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SPRE and the NMSU-A

An Integrated Assessment and Strategic Planning Process: What We've Learned and Where We're Going

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Discussion

The New Mexico Commission on Higher Education issued *Final Draft Standards for SPRE* in September 1994. Since then, NMSU-Alamogordo, a 2300 headcount branch community college of New Mexico State University has actively developed SPRE implementation strategies. We feel that the three-year old Integrated Assessment and Strategic Planning (IASP) process is the best vehicle to comply with pending SPRE standards. IASP was developed during our NCA self-study. We are faced with multiple requirements of the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act, the 1992 amendments to the Higher Education Act, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Amendments of 1990 (Public Law 101-392), and other external sources. They and our own desire to assess and improve program offerings and student learning propel our continued assessment efforts. The operation of IASP is described in the 1994 edition of *A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement* (Leas & Lillibridge, 1994). This paper reports how we changed IASP and how well it works after three years of operation. It will feature the progress we have made using IASP to comply with SPRE and other accountability standards.

How We Assess Student Academic Achievement

Classroom assessment and classroom research as advocated by K. Patricia Cross and Thomas Angelo is a significant element of our assessment efforts. The assessment of student performance is done at the faculty level. Faculty members each do at least one assessment project every year. Examples of these projects are reported in *Student Academic Achievement: Report to the Provost* (Leas, 1993). The Office of Institutional Effectiveness supports faculty assessment projects with technical assistance. The faculty member is responsible for the development of research questions and project design. Technical assistance includes help with study design, statistics, computer analysis, and general advice about establishing valid ways to find out how our students are performing. This research includes student surveys, alumni surveys, test item analysis, and extensive longitudinal retention and persistence studies. An important assessment tool is student performance on standardized licensure examinations. We have joined LONESTAR and will use their student tracking system to supplement future reporting and research.

Implementation Strategy Used to Foster Faculty Support

Accrediting entities and funding agencies have formalized accountability requirements for educational institutions. Like other colleges, NMSU-A faced an NCA accreditation site visit in March 1993. At that time, we had no institutional assessment plan, no comprehensive long-range plan, and we did not have an institutional researcher. Fortunately we had visionary leadership to launch a faculty-driven, self-study process that emphasized institutional improvement. By focusing on the question of "how we could do better?" instead of only questioning "what were we doing wrong?", the evaluation aspect inherent in assessment activities was minimized. Beyond the positive emphasis on improvement, a key to the success of the assessment and strategic planning process was that every staff and faculty member and many students had a voice in the process (Leas & Lillibridge, 1994).

Early in the self-study we decided our assessment and planning had to be couched conceptually in our mission and purposes statement. The criteria stressed and evaluated by NCA provides the umbrella under which our mission and purposes rest. Once this conceptual matrix was developed, the concrete measures of our effectiveness took on more meaning. All employees had an opportunity to help develop the conceptual framework and to visualize their role in the achievement of our mission. Our approach was inclusive. The result was that many more people understand how assessment yields usable information and provides direction for fulfilling our mission (Himebrook, Twomey, Beck, Flores, & Elliott, 1992).

Guided by decisions to 1) focus on improvement, 2) involve every faculty/staff and many students, and 3) be conceptually-driven by our mission and purposes statement, we established the cornerstone committees to launch the assessment and planning effort. The three major committees were: the Self-Study Steering Committee, the Mission and Purposes Review Committee, and the Institutional Assessment Committee. Each committee consisted of personnel from all areas of campus; however, in the spirit of our informally endorsed shared-governance philosophy, more than half the membership of each committee was faculty. The chair of two of the committees was a faculty member, and the chair of the Steering Committee was the Associate Provost for Instruction. While all departments on campus had a role in the formulation of the assessment and planning model, the process was faculty-driven. Therefore, the faculty felt they owned the assessment process. As a result, compliance with IASP implementation projects was enthusiastic and the results were impressive.

IASP Changed the Institution and We Changed IASP

The effectiveness of IASP in terms of concrete institutional change has been considerable. The campus has gone from a pre-1990 attitude of "what's assessment?" and "who really needs it?" to the present realization that we may be doing too much assessment. When the Institutional Assessment Committee did its original review of assessment activity in 1990, they discovered that quite a lot of assessment was being done on campus. Usually, we did not call what we were doing—assessment—but it really was!

Most faculty have fully embraced assessment as a legitimate extension of good teaching. Academic assessment varies with each discipline and instructor. While not all assessment activities would be considered as high-level classroom research, many have yielded concrete results and have led to real and positive changes. In the three years since the advent of IASP, our campus has changed. One significant change was the modification of IASP from a one-year cycle to a two-year cycle. This was done to allow more time for assessment and planning and more time for implementation of the resultant strategic plan.

Research that focused on developmental studies disciplines resulted in the adoption of a new pre-college level English curriculum. IASP also showed that learning centers for English and Math needed additional space and staffing. We established a Spanish language laboratory to serve this expanding program. Other assessment projects led to revisions of syllabi and course content. Retention studies have reinforced the notion that not all student groups experience college in the same way. This heightened awareness has allowed student service counselors to work more effectively with at-risk students. The operational time line of IASP coincides with the budget approval cycle. As a result, IASP promotes the reallocation of campus financial resources. This has included the creation of an Office of Information, Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Office of Community

Education/Distance Learning, and Office of Grants Coordination. IASP clearly showed that classroom space allocations were not always consistent with instructional needs. It also allows current issues like the American's with Disabilities Act, Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act, and state funding formula deficiencies to receive greater attention.

Reaction of the Faculty and Staff to IASP

During the initial phases of IASP, faculty and staff designed and conducted assessments examining such aspects of instruction as student academic achievement, instructor effectiveness, and course content. All programs, all disciplines, and virtually all classes were individually assessed.

The faculty's assessment role has evolved during the past three years. In the early stages of IASP each faculty member assessed each of his or her classes every semester. After a year of assessing all classes, faculty were feeling overwhelmed with the amount of time required to do it well. Some suggested that classroom teaching and preparation was suffering. In Fall 1994 faculty, division heads, and administration decided that too much assessment was taking place. It was concluded that assessment of programs, disciplines, and classes will be done on a rotation basis. The result is that high priority programs will receive the prompt attention they require.

The decision to slow the pace of the ongoing assessment activity required considerable deliberation. Too much assessment might lead to burnout and drive some faculty to settle for "face-compliance" in lieu of "real assessment." We resolved it was possible that by doing less assessment we just might achieve higher quality assessment. The decision could only be made because we had established solid baseline measures during the first IASP cycle.

Beginning in 1995, we adopted a new faculty evaluation document that includes an assessment component. With the guidance of their division head and the support of the institutional researcher, faculty will design one expanded and innovative assessment project each calendar year. The linkage of the assessment of student academic achievement and faculty evaluation shows the importance NMSU-A places on assessment. We affirm that assessment of teaching and student learning is crucial. However, it should not diminish the emphasis on classroom teaching and preparation.

IASP will be Used to Comply with SPRE, NCA, etc.

IASP is a very flexible process. It is continually being upgraded and improved. When the 1992 amendments to the Higher Education Act became law, and resultant New Mexico SPRE standards were drafted, it became obvious that NMSU-A was going to face substantial accountability requirements. These requirements added to those previously delineated by NCA accreditation guidelines, the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act, and Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Amendments of 1990 (Public Law 101-392). We realized that we had to do something to manage these often daunting requirements for information and reports. Our goal is to create a structured student outcomes assessment program to comply with "all" external requirements. The IASP committee established an Outcomes Assessment key factor committee to direct this task.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness hired an Outcomes Assessment Coordinator to update the assessment matrices that were the basis of the *Development of an Assessment Package for NMSU-Alamogordo, New Mexico,* (1992). This report was the culmination of work done for the NCA self-study. Another important tool was an American Association of Community Colleges Special Report, *Community Colleges: Core Indicators of Effectiveness* (1994). The goal was to inventory campus assessment efforts and needs. This effort was based on a review of pertinent literature and extended interviews with program and division heads. The result of this work was *SPRE Compliance Matrix* (Hawkins, 1995). The matrix is based on our mission and purposes statement and lists significant outcomes and accountability measures associated with external entities. Our approach was to find out:

- what we could do [the dream]
- what we should do [accountability and reporting requirements]
- what we really want to do [whether to ignore the requirement or comply for relevant and meaningful purposes], and
- what we can do [the reality - money and time issues].

This matrix has served as the basis for development for outcomes assessment data collection instruments, research questions, implementation schedule, and operating procedures. Our work will focus initially on our professional, technical, and vocational programs. The goal is to develop a model/prototype to assess other academic programs.

Summary

The development, implementation, and operation of the IASP process to assess student academic achievement and institutional effectiveness required several years of extensive involvement of administrators, faculty, and staff. The process has proven to be very effective in driving positive change at NMSU-A. Although the implementation of the IASP process has progressed better than anticipated, the institution has not become complacent. IASP serves as the vehicle to plan and carry out our efforts to comply with New Mexico State Postsecondary Reporting Entity (SPRE), NCA, and other external requirements.

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The Role of Assessment in Long-Range Strategic Planning: A Case Study

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Northeast Missouri State University is currently engaged in developing a comprehensive long-range plan that will take the University into the 21st Century. The current planning process and the recent history of planning at Northeast represent examples of just how important assessment can be, not only in ascertaining the effectiveness of an institution, but also in establishing meaningful goals for the future.

A Brief History and Overview of Assessment at Northeast

In order to monitor its progress toward achieving its educational goals, Northeast has developed an extensive assessment program based on a model of "triangulation" that represents the philosophy of multiple measures. The program has three major components that associate with these goals:

- value-added
- comparative
- attitudinal

Over the past 20 years, the University has adopted a number of strategies to develop a comprehensive program that has led to a culture that expects the use of data in planning and decision-making.

Assessment began with its comparative component at Northeast in 1973 when President Charles McClain asked graduating students to volunteer to take senior exams. Beginning in 1974, all graduating seniors sat for a comparative exam in the major. Various exams were used as majors administered nationally normed instruments whenever possible. A few majors, such as art and agriculture, used locally written exams in the absence of suitable externally normed instruments. Many majors now use the *Major Field Achievement Test* (MFAT). Other exams include the *National Teacher's Examination* (NTE) and board exams for professional degrees such as those available in accounting and nursing.

Value-added assessment began in 1975 with the *Sequential Test of Educational Progress* (STEP). In 1978, the University began utilizing the ACT to measure growth in the basic skill areas. In the spring of 1981, the University initiated the use of the ACT *College Outcome Measures Project* (COMP) to measure value added. The *Collegiate Assessment of Academic Progress* (CAAP) was put into place in 1990, with 50% of the freshman class taking COMP and 50% taking CAAP as the pre-test. Each student has then retaken the same exam as a post-test after the completion of 45 semester hours. In the 1993-94 school year, the post-test was shifted to be taken after the completion of 60 semester hours. The *Academic Profile* (AP) was piloted in place of the COMP exam in the 1994-95 school year. The effects of shifting the time of post-testing and the use of the AP exam will be monitored and reviewed.

Attitudinal assessment began at about the same time as the value-added testing initiative. Northeast developed the *Summer Orientation Student Survey* (SOSS) for incoming freshman and the *Institutional Student Survey* (ISS) for currently enrolled students. The *Graduating Student Questionnaire* (GSQ) was adapted from a survey developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. The University also uses a *Survey of Alumni* and a *Survey of Employers* developed by ACT to provide assessment of effectiveness after students have graduated. Northeast currently uses each of these instruments with the exception of the SOSS. It has been replaced by the *Cooperative Institutional Research Project* (CIRP) sponsored by UCLA.

Since 1984, Northeast's assessment program has expanded greatly to include a variety of qualitative measures of effectiveness. This expansion evolved from a tradition of developing multiple measures of quality and student growth, particularly in complex areas for which objective tests were believed to be inadequate, such as higher order thinking skills, scientific reasoning and data analysis, writing ability, and overall student growth over time. Portfolios were initiated in 1988 to develop a local assessment of the liberal arts and sciences core curriculum and to promote self-assessment by students. The *Sophomore Writing Experience* began in 1979 and was mandated in 1984 for all students to assess the effectiveness of writing use across the curriculum and student growth as writers. An interview project began in 1993 to gather information from a random sample of juniors concerning classroom experiences that could not be gathered by institutional surveys. Finally, capstone experiences have been designed for each major so that the student has the opportunity to see several years of study come together as a unit and the faculty can holistically evaluate individual students as well as the major program.

Clearly, what began in 1973 as an assessment project has grown into a pervasive assessment culture that expects the use of multiple measures to produce data that illuminate answers and often generate more questions about accomplishing Northeast's educational and other purposes. These expectations translate into deliberate, thoughtful decision-making in all aspects of the University. Changes in the mission of the University, the profile of incoming students, the curriculum for general education and the major, and demonstrated abilities of graduating students can all be traced to the use of assessment data.

Assessment and Planning at Northeast

To understand the role that assessment has played in planning at Northeast, it is important to examine the University's most recently completed long-range plan.

- **The Recent History of Planning at Northeast.** In 1986 the Missouri Legislature designated Northeast as the state's liberal arts and sciences institution, expressly changing its mission from that of a regional comprehensive university to one of serving the entire state as its only public liberal arts and sciences institution. At this critical time in its history, Northeast's assessment program was instrumental in helping the University continue to put in place the ingredients necessary to accomplish this mission change. In developing a *Five Year Plan* to facilitate this change in mission, the University's long-standing assessment program allowed it to establish a clear picture of itself—its human, physical, and technological resources—and identify strategies to bring about the kind of change necessary. In addition to presenting this clear picture of the then-current status of the University, the assessment program provided the opportunity for systematic monitoring of growth toward the goals established in the long-range plan. In fact, the existing assessment plan supplied longitudinal data for all significant elements of the plan.

  In each of the five years following the development of the *Five Year Plan* in 1986-87, the University entered into a review of the assessment data generated during the year relative to the goals established in the plan. Conversations among faculty, administration and staff at these yearly review sessions was critical in the University's acknowledgment of its progress and its ability to effectively focus attention on areas of concern.

  What became evident in reviewing the assessment data over the course of the *Five Year Plan* was that the University had indeed effectively put into place those elements it had identified as necessary to provide the kind of environment that it had envisioned five years earlier. As the University had set measurable goals for itself during the 1986-87 planning process, the multiple means of assessment used at Northeast charted very clearly the progress toward those goals. It also became evident that although these critical elements had indeed been developed, there were other indications provided by assessment that this transformation needed to continue. In particular, it was acknowledged that what might only be defined as a "liberal arts culture" had not yet fully developed.

◆ Current Planning Efforts. The dramatic change in the institution that had been illustrated by the assessment program became the foundation for discussions in Northeast's *University Master Plan 1995-2002*, currently under development. This plan is organized into three constituent elements:

- inputs and resources
- environment
- outcomes

Each of these elements is focused by means of an overarching goal in support of the University mission and emphasizes student learning. More specific goals related to each of the overarching goals have been created with a set of explicit indicators for each. As these indicators were developed, each was matched with a corresponding point in the assessment plan. By doing this, not only does the institution have a means by which to measure its progress toward these goals, it also has a history of development relative to these assessment indicators. These data, gathered over the years, were very helpful in projecting reasonable rates of growth and improvement.

Planning Design

I. Constituent Element (I-E-O model)
    A. Overarching Goal
        1. Specific Goal
            a. indicators (drawn from multiple assessment points)

If the overriding principle for the *University Master Plan* was to be focused on and supportive of student learning and high achievement, the assessment plan became a reflection of that principle. The assessment of the *Five Year Plan* had helped the University community to understand that the building of the liberal arts culture must be part of the next phase of transition. In order to help the University gauge its effectiveness in creating this desired culture, the development of additional assessment measures and the revision of surveys was undertaken. The addition of more qualitative means of assessment, namely a portfolio assessment and junior interview, were geared to presenting an image of the institutional support in building the liberal arts culture. Specifically, the portfolio and interview address issues of curriculum delivery and achievement of liberal studies goals. Aspects of the co-curricular experience as it supports learning are included in the surveys. Surveys also include questions that will reveal more quantitative data, such as the number of times that a student cites participating in educationally purposeful co-curricular activities, frequency of major papers in coursework, participation in multi-cultural experiences, etc.

Since the plan is comprehensive in scope, a faculty survey will be developed to present another perspective to measure success. The staff review process will transform to provide information regarding staff support of the various goals related to their participation in student learning.

The future of assessment and planning at Northeast appears bright. Planning and assessment have matured into a cyclical system of inputs for one another over time, as they should. As assessment fueled discussion for planning in the *University Master Plan*, that plan has fed into the future of assessment by calling for expansion of faculty involvement in the enterprise and for the development of faculty and staff surveys. There is no doubt that the assessment program at Northeast will continue to evolve and to be enhanced as faculty search for ways to better utilize the data for planning, program review, and for accountability.

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Linking Planning and Budgeting Through Business Process Redesign

Marianne E. Inman

In spring 1994 Northland College faculty and staff members concluded an extensive strategic planning process, resulting in revised statements of mission and institutional values, a presidential vision, and a forward-looking plan focusing on academic excellence and intellectual climate, outreach to the community and the region, student development and enrollment, and building a strong college community. The plan addresses centrally our continuing attention to defining our distinctive liberal arts and environmental mission and to designing and delivering programs that integrate these two emphases within our curriculum. Following completion of the strategic plan, Northland undertook the massive project of linking budgeting with our clearly articulated plan. Because it was clear that incremental budgeting, which had been the norm, was no longer feasible and that the budget for FY96 that emerged from this process would need to reflect considerable streamlining and new ways of functioning, we looked to the strategies of Business Process Redesign and Continuous Quality Improvement as guides for our work.

Over the summer, the college's need to engage in these processes was communicated throughout the campus community both orally and in writing. A long and detailed letter from the president was sent to every faculty and staff member early in the summer outlining the nature of our challenge and inviting everyone's participation in the deliberations in the months to come. Early in June the Continuous Quality Improvement Steering Committee participated in a two-day workshop introducing us to many of the group process techniques that can be most helpful in redesigning and improving processes and products on campus. During the summer, then, a core Planning and Budgeting Team of 40 persons met twice to receive extensive statistical and other background information and to begin to identify the key areas on which to focus attention. Subcommittees were formed after the first day-long session, and members met with some frequency before the second session was held six weeks later. At that time a number of specific recommendations from each subcommittee were made that members felt had the potential to either reduce expenditures or enhance revenues. Improved student retention and greater efficiencies in operation were broad categories that surfaced in most groups.

Following this preliminary summer work, 14 cross-functional teams were formed to review in greater depth key processes and functions that had the greatest potential to have a positive impact on the budget and on the overall quality of the Northland experience for students. These teams were augmented by a Technology Team comprised of campus experts in electronic technology to support both academic and administrative applications, and by two existing representative bodies, the Academic Council and the Faculty Welfare and Review Committee. The Academic Council, in turn, referred their task to the Program Review Team, a subgroup of the council that had met regularly over the past three years as reviews of all academic programs had taken place. Each group received a charge from the President and the timeline on which work was to be completed—less than four months! Overseeing the process was another representative group, the Executive Steering Committee, which received progress reports from the various BPR (Business Process Redesign, or as they have come to be known, "beeper") teams and addressed process issues and problems as they arose. This is the group that received all the BPR teams' final recommendations and the one that has been charged with prioritizing those recommendations so that the financial goals for a balanced budget are met.

During December and January the Steering Committee met regularly and frequently, as did senior administrative staff members, in order to conduct extensive and intensive reviews of each functional area of the College in a process similar to that which the Program Review Team undertook to examine new academic programs. In mid-December, a campus-wide meeting was held to review the rationale for the BPRs, the budget assumptions on which the work was based, committee and team processes, and results and recommendations to date.

All fall the work of these teams proceeded swiftly. Most committees met weekly, and some, such as the Program Review team, met daily over a two-month period in order to conclude their work by the December deadline. Tremendous levels of energy and creativity were evident across the campus. Approximately 90% of faculty and staff members were on a BPR or other review team. Almost every team included student representatives as well. The tasks were highly diverse, ranging from Personnel Contracting or Early Retirement to Donor Acknowledgment, Student Retention, or Faculty Workload.

To date the Program Review recommendations have had the most significant campus impact, as the task of that group was to "streamline curriculum" and "reduce faculty cost." Supported by extensive historical enrollment data and other statistical measures provided by the Office of the Registrar, the Program Review Team recommended dropping several concentrations within academic programs along with a number of "nice to have" but "not essential" courses, often taught by adjunct faculty members. No program was eliminated altogether, and the faculty in each program were asked to make their own recommendations to the Team. The spirit of cooperation was very helpful and made the work of the Team a very collegial effort. While faculty members were not, of course, pleased with the reductions, they recognized the necessity for them, participated fully in the process, and have come to accept the changes envisioned.

Recommendations from other groups that are currently being considered are a first year extended academic orientation course taught by faculty advisors, The Northland Seminar, and the requirement for first year students of our existing offering, Introduction to Environmental Studies, a course that is team taught by a biologist, a sociologist, and an environmental philosopher. These two experiences are designed to be totally consistent with Northland's mission and will, we hope, provide the kind of bonding with the college that correlates positively with retention. Also on the drawing board is a senior capstone experience to round out students' academic program and to constitute a critical element in Northland's assessment plan.

In order to accomplish these additional tasks with the resources of the current faculty, the Welfare and Review Committee is considering a new approach to calculating faculty work load. This system would be based on credit hour production rather than on numbers of courses or credits. In a nutshell, faculty members would each be expected to generate an "average" number of credit hours. Those who generated credit hours beyond the average would be able to "bank" them toward future sabbatical leave time, while those who generated fewer credit hours than the average would be expected to assume additional responsibilities, including teaching additional courses. There is also, under this plan, provision for credit units for substantial administrative or service work in addition to those generated by teaching. The net result of this plan as projected is to increase faculty productivity and reduce faculty cost by eliminating most adjunct positions and overload payments. An added advantage is the prospect of a sabbatical leave, a benefit that Northland College faculty have not yet enjoyed.

Other types of savings included reductions in time for selected staff members, not replacing staff or faculty members who will be on leave next year, consolidating the staffing between functionally related and contiguous offices, and replacing some print media with electronic access. In the area of revenue enhancements, recommendations included expanding our summer school offerings, charging fees for certain academic and student life services, and anticipating additional revenues from programs offered through Northland's Lifelong Learning Center.

Following approval of the final budget by the Board of Trustees in late January, the Northland community will move ahead with further work by the BPR Executive Steering Committee and the Strategic Planning Team. The tasks of these groups will involve assessing progress to date towards achieving goals within the strategic plan, adjusting the plan as appropriate, and projecting the plan to 2001 based on current and new assumptions.

Through this planning and budgeting process, a variety of ideas and suggestions have surfaced that members of senior staff and the Steering Committee believe, if pursued and implemented, will contribute to fulfilling Northland's mission and achieving fiscal stability. The following "mandates" became very clear as the BPR teams and review committees concluded the first phases of their work:

- Implement plans for student success and retention as recommended by the Retention and New Student Services Committees.
- Redesign the environmental curriculum as proposed in the Strategic Plan and by the Program Review Team.
- Plan pilot "Center(s) for Environmental Solutions" as sketched in the Strategic Plan.
- Restructure campus decision-making so as to increase campus-wide participation, streamline bureaucracy and enhance communication. There is clear consensus that the current practice of using the President's Staff as the ultimate decision-making body of the College will move to a College Council format, a group that would add faculty and staff members and a student representative to the senior administrative staff in order to guide the College in a much more broadly based fashion.
- Redefine, rethink, and redesign administrative and infrastructure systems and approaches.
- Redefine, rethink, and redesign academic programs and all services delivered to students.
- Reevaluate what outreach programs Northland can realistically offer and sustain in response to the region's needs.
- Determine how academic tenure, staff contracts, and early retirement can work for Northland College.
- Update the campus facilities master plan.
- Update and articulate a comprehensive plan and time line for technological advances on campus.
- Plan the next phase of the comprehensive campaign.
- Develop a comprehensive communications plan.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to achieve financial stability.
- Continue the work of the following Business Process Redesign teams and task forces:
  - Summer Session
  - Other Summer Programs
  - Day Care Center
  - Purchasing
  - Retention

With such extensive involvement among the college community, we have achieved many positive outcomes from the entire process and are confident of continued progress. There has been a vast increase in the level of understanding of all college systems and in the fiscal realities essential for long-term institutional viability. The highly participatory nature of this process has ensured personal investment in the result. In sum, both the process itself and the changes that have come out of the deliberations have already sparked the creativity, imagination, and the forward thinking that will be required to enter the 21st century. The Northland community is stronger and better focused now than it has been for some time, thanks to our broadly based systems for planning and budgeting.

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Chapter IX

Focus on Criterion Five

The Integrity Criterion at the Two-Year Technical College

Thomas Quinn
Julie Brookbank

So now we have to respond to a new criterion, which at first glance appears to be relatively simple. Integrity? At a technical college? After a lengthy review of published material, it seemed that all we could find were articles and books specifically written about ethical problems at large academic institutions: ethics in the classroom; faculty departure from rigorous standards of research; inappropriate recruiting of student athletes; conflicts of interest in teaching, publishing and consulting; and improper use of grant funds. This led us to the conclusion that it is the "big" schools that should be most concerned with integrity issues.

Our self-study steering committee had attended the 1993 and 1994 Annual Meetings in Chicago where we had specifically looked for information in other self-studies that would help us. Since we were one of the first two-year technical colleges to be evaluated with the new criterion, we found little to help us.

But the evaluation team was on its way to our college, Mitchell Technical Institute, in Mitchell, South Dakota, and we needed to find a way to include the "simple" fifth criterion in our self-study. Suddenly, it wasn't so simple, nor was it only for "big" schools. How would we, as a small two-year technical college, fulfill the requirement of "demonstrating integrity" in our "practices and relationships"? How could we document or show patterns of evidence that we did, or worse yet, did not have institutional integrity? Furthermore, how could we involve our staff and even get them to talk about integrity? How could we prove to them that this was a critical issue, not just for NCA evaluation purposes, but for day-to-day operations? We began by examining NCA materials to gain a clear idea of NCA expectations and to generate an overall definition of institutional integrity within the context of a small, two-year technical college.

Definition of Institutional Integrity

Effective in 1994 the North Central Association developed a new criterion for accreditation. The new criterion described in its 1994 *Handbook on Accreditation* states simply that a member institution must "demonstrate integrity in its practices and relationships" (North Central Association of Colleges and Schools [NCA], 1994). It requires a member institution to "incorporate into its accrediting process consideration of all matters that speak to the integrity with which an institution of higher education conducts its business" (NCA, 1994).

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, integrity is defined as "rigid adherence to a code or standard of values; the state of being unimpaired or sound; and the quality or condition of being whole or undivided." The *NCA Handbook for Accreditation* describes integrity as adherence "to the civil laws and to the code of ethics commonly accepted by the academic community" (NCA, 1994). The American Assembly (1979) uses the terms "integrity" and "ethical conduct" interchangeably. Huffman (1982) defines integrity as consistency between the claims an institution makes and its deeds. A simple definition of institutional integrity is that an institution does what it says it will do (Hegerty, 1983).

We found the Hegerty definition of integrity, within the context of accreditation, was an essential guide. In beginning our search for the patterns of evidence that would support institutional integrity at Mitchell Technical Institute, we based our examination on Hegerty's statement: Were we doing what we claimed we were doing?

In addition, we had discussions about the values of the organization and the institution's code of ethics, both written and unwritten.

What Is An Institution of Integrity?

We believe there are some general characteristics of technical colleges that will help identify them as institutions of integrity. To be perceived as possessing integrity, a college must:

1. Establish its mission and purposes clearly.
2. Effectively communicate institutional processes and expectations to students.
3. View itself as providing services to students, communities, and society.
4. Produce publications that accurately represent the institution.
5. Have programs that meet the needs of the public it serves.
6. Meet all its contractual responsibilities.
7. Not exploit its students or faculty.
8. Be unvarying in interpreting and applying standards and policies.
9. Be responsive to challenges to claims against its integrity.
10. Have the ability to meet the needs of its students.
11. Require personnel to keep up-to-date to maintain academic rigor and currency.
12. Insist on academic honesty and uphold intellectual standards.
13. Practice full disclosure to the public.
14. Operate without conflict of interest.

Importance of Institutional Integrity

NCA developed the new criterion knowing that institutions of higher education must be committed to the "pursuit of truth." The "institutional behavior must be beyond reproach" (NCA, 1994). Pragmatically, how an institution is perceived by its public can have an impact on student enrollments and placement rates, vital issues to the financial success of any college.

An institution that lacks integrity will be perceived by the public as untrustworthy. In some instances, higher education's reputation has been sullied because "consensus on what constitutes legitimate higher education has been reduced, and expectations of it—and claims for it—have not been fulfilled." (The American Assembly, 1979). A loss of integrity can be especially difficult to regain in smaller colleges that have close ties to their communities.

MTI's First Steps to Integrity

Mitchell Technical Institute's first step toward documenting integrity in our recent self-study was to review the culture of the organization and the institution's ethical values. Through this review process, MTI's ethics and policies were compared to actual practices.

The second step was to evaluate our publications and policy statements for accuracy. For example, we looked for policies that were perhaps not uniformly enforced; information that was outdated; or implied claims or promises subtly made, but not delivered.

Our third step was to examine administrative practices and governance issues. At this point, the steering committee involved the entire faculty in evaluating our practices, legal and operational.

Areas MTI Examined For Integrity

MTI chose to evaluate integrity within the institution's five major service areas. The following lists of questions were presented to our self-study task forces. One task force was assigned to each of the five service areas. The task forces examined documentation and responded to each of the questions. Their responses were collated and infused into the self-study report.

- **Governance, Fiscal and Administrative Services**

1. Are non-discrimination and equity statements found on documents? Are there procedures for addressing grievances on these issues?
2. Is an affirmative action plan available and is there evidence that the plan was appropriately developed and is uniformly used?
3. Is there a sexual harassment policy and a rapid response to claims of sexual harassment?
4. Is there a standard code of professional ethics and conduct with which all members are expected toccomply?
5. Is due process outlined in grievance procedures?
6. Does the college have a process for the resolution of internal disputes?
7. Are the relationships with other institutions professional?
8. Are contractual agreements adhered to?
9. Do citizen advisory committees understand their role? Does the institution avoid exploitation of the advisory committees?
10. Is the institution financially accountable and does it pay bills promptly?
11. Do publications reflect the actual cost of attending the institution? Are students informed of the costs of attending the institution?
12. Are students given the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them?
13. Are student loan default rates monitored?
14. Does the institution publicly disclose information on financial matters?
15. Does the institution follow standard academic procedures?
16. Does the name of the college reflect its mission?
17. Does the college responsibly regulate itself?

- **Student Services**

1. Do admissions policies relate to the mission and are they uniformly applied?
2. Is student government provided support for its function?
3. Is counseling assistance provided to students with substance abuse problems?
4. Is student information confidential?
5. Are practices in place to promote gender and racial equity?
6. Are academic transcripts constructed to reflect student academic achievement?
7. Is financial aid information accurately provided to students?
8. Does student insurance protect the student while participating in student activities?
9. Is student housing safe and accurately represented?
10. Are students with disabilities provided appropriate adaptations?
11. Is placement rate information provided students?

- **Instructional Services**

1. Are course schedules accurate and easily understood?
2. Are faculty credentials appropriate and accurately displayed?
3. Are laboratory resources appropriate for course work?
4. Are course syllabi accurate and do they outline the course?
5. Do faculty members have academic freedom?
6. Is the student evaluation/grading system accurately represented and uniformly applied and are grievances promptly resolved?
7. Are instructors required to update themselves and their courses?
8. Is the disciplinary and grievance process fairly applied?
9. Are articulation agreements accurately portrayed?
10. Are majors and programs described consistently with standard practices?

11. Are requirements of degrees and diplomas well defined?
12. Are students allowed to finish discontinued programs?
13. Are student course evaluations appropriately administered?

- **Marketing Services**

1. Are publications accurate?
2. Are all advertisements accurate?
3. Is placement information accurate?
4. Are new programs appropriately developed and marketed?
5. Is survey information collected responsibly?

- **Physical Services**

1. Do bidding processes for equipment follow state laws?
2. Is adequate insurance provided for students?
3. Does the campus comply with the Campus Security Act?
4. Is the campus safe and secure?
5. Are all areas handicapped accessible?
6. Are classrooms overcrowded?
7. Does administration investigate issues that may compromise the health of students?
8. Is the institution adequately insured for liability?
9. Is there a formal cancellation procedure for weather or other causes?
10. Is the faculty concerned with the physical environment of classrooms?

Documenting Integrity

MTI used two methods to examine institutional integrity in its self-study. First, self-study teams responded to written questions taken from the previous lists. Narrative comments recorded in meeting minutes provided documentation that integrity issues were discussed. Second, samples of various constituencies were surveyed to identify strengths and concerns about integrity. The following is a listing of the populations and the surveys MTI used:

1. Students (student satisfaction inventory)
2. MTI graduates (graduate follow-up survey)
3. Students (end-of-course evaluations)
4. The general public (perception survey)
5. Employers (employer survey)
6. Faculty (survey of institutional climate)
7. High school counselors (opinion survey)

The survey data were collected, sorted, and examined for questions and responses specifically related to integrity issues within the five service areas.

Conclusion

Because of the nature of their mission and the closeness of their relationship to the public, technical colleges need a high level of public trust to operate effectively. Public legislative support is needed to maintain adequate levels of funding. Business and industry support is needed and used to maintain relevant curriculum, to supply up-to-date laboratory equipment, and to hire graduates. To maintain trust it is imperative that technical colleges willingly meet the challenge of assessing their integrity. We believe that failure to live up to acceptable standards of integrity will harm the professional reputation of any institution and everybody associated with it, public support will be weakened, the state may reduce funding, and, most importantly, students will lose educational opportunities. Regardless of how we regulate ourselves, the public is continually assessing two-year colleges on the basis of cost, quality, and access to services.

The enterprise of accreditation is now in a unique position to promote institutional self-study and guide an institution toward integrity (Lenn, 1989). The North Central Association has taken a leadership role in establishing the new criterion for integrity. Educators must support their efforts for the good of *all* institutions of higher education or else "the irresponsibilities of the few will tarnish the good name of all" (The American Assembly, 1979). The impact of the NCA criterion has not yet been fully realized. Institutions of higher education now need to be proactive in developing processes to strengthen and ensure integrity, thereby securing public trust. Failure to do so will very likely bring about intrusive governmental control (Greenberg,1994).

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Looking for the Big I: The Search for Institutional Integrity

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How does a self-study team address the concept of institutional integrity? At first glance, the task does not appear to be overwhelming. North Central Association's fifth criterion for accreditation directs the College to "demonstrate integrity in (its) practices and relationships." In addition, the Commission clarifies its intent by explaining that institutions operating with integrity "adhere both to civil laws and to the code of ethics commonly accepted by the academic community." Further, the *Handbook of Accreditation, 1994–1996* provides a framework on the creation of criterion five by noting, "During the past decade, some widely-reported lapses in institutional integrity have brought into new focus the relationship between institutional integrity and institutional accreditation."

Upon careful study, however, the challenge to examine institutional integrity appears much more complex. Questions surface as to what actually constitutes integrity. After all, although most members of an academic community understand the concept of integrity, few can readily define the term. And although everyone looks upon integrity as a positive attribute, few choose to openly discuss the concept at will. In all likelihood, questions of individual or institutional integrity seldom surface in the academy outside of crisis situations.

The institutional integrity self-study group at Moraine Valley Community College was given two charges:

- to determine if the College has been ethical in its values and policies;
- to determine if the College has maintained and promoted academic integrity.

Initially off to a good start in addressing the charges, the self-study group quickly "hit the wall." Questions were raised, such as the following:

- Is this it? Just because we publish a policy, does that mean we have integrity?
- What or who determines what integrity is?
- How does one quantify such an elusive concept?

The answers to the above-noted questions appeared dependent upon the level of review that the committee chose to pursue. Four levels with respect to analyzing institutional integrity surfaced and are outlined in Table 1. At the most basic level, identified by the lower case "i," the committee would review policy to determine if the college professed in written statements to act with integrity. Such an analysis appeared cursory and unsatisfactory, for institutional integrity is more than "writing the right words." Nor would a review of this type meet the standard of the Commission, which expects statements related to integrity to be reflected in institutional practices and procedures.

Levels Of Institutional Integrity
Moving from the Small "i" to the large "I"

"i"	Level	
	1	Stating adherence to commonly accepted principles, civil laws and a code of ethics
	2	Ensuring that the statements related to integrity are reflected in practices and procedures
	3	Looking beyond the commonly accepted principles toward the subtle, seldom expressed, difficult to discuss issues that reflect upon the integrity of the institution
"i"	4	Achieving a shared perception among the college community that the actions, decisions and processes of the institution reflect integrity

The second level of study, therefore, would reflect the institution's intent to demonstrate adherence to integrity-related policies in its practices and procedures. For example, not only would the College have policies addressing affirmative action and equal opportunity, but also it would demonstrate commitment to these statements in employment decisions and athletic programming. In addition, a policy discouraging sexual or discriminatory harassment would not only be written, but also procedures to address such allegations would be implemented and publicized. Examining the second level of integrity would include reviewing College publications and interviewing, not only those responsible for integrity-related policies, but also those affected by these policies, including students, support staff, faculty, and administrators. Integrity would be documented by a general sense of awareness that procedures exist to implement policy addressing integrity and that anyone could use these procedures without fear of recrimination.

Although the second level of analyzing integrity was clearly superior to the first, it was still perceived as incomplete, also identified by the small "i," and labeled the "low road" by the self-study group. A "high road" had emerged, that challenged group members to do more than review politically-correct policy statements associated with institutional integrity. This high road, noted as the upper case "I," would require examination of the seldom expressed, difficult to discuss issues that more completely reflect upon the integrity of an institution. These issues, examples of which are noted in Table 2, are dependent upon the climate of the institution and are a product of the College's mission and planning statements, systems of governance and communication, and process of making and implementing decisions.

While analysis at the second level of integrity leads to an examination of what a college professes in policy, review at the third level requires identifying issues that a college may prefer to overlook. For example, does an athletic department that expresses a commitment to total student success act with integrity by allowing an individual to participate in a sport while not attending class? Or does an academic department that develops a class schedule based on faculty interests, rather than student needs, act with integrity when doing so?

The high road consists of identifying and examining the sensitive and subtle issues that define discrepancies between what is said and what is done at a college. It is based on the premise that many of the most valid indicators of institutional integrity are the least apparent to the casual observer. Following the high road will clarify the attitudes and actions that a college will foster, as well as those it appears to ignore. Finally, pursuing this path addresses the Commission's mandate to demonstrate integrity in the practices and relationships of all areas of a college.

The high road, however, is not to be confused with a judgmental, "holier than thou" approach. Rather, it views institutional and professional integrity as ongoing developmental processes of making the best decision when faced with complex options. Viewed in this way, a sensitive, integrity-based issue need not be avoided. Instead, the issue should be openly addressed by all involved parties who strive to achieve consensus on the most acceptable and ethical conclusion.

The self-study committee struggled with how to assess the third level of integrity. Although each committee member could identify an issue appropriate for this level of study, the examination of these issues in isolation would not present a collective picture of the institution's integrity. A necessary focus was achieved by studying the strategic directions recently adopted by the College.

Patterns Of Evidence Related to Each Level of Integrity

“i”	Level		
	1	Written expression of intent to operate with integrity.	Strategic directions/ Grievance procedure/ Policies on affirmative action, harassment, equal opportunity/ Contract with bargaining groups
	2	Assessment of integrity in institutional practice and procedures	Commitment to diversity reflected in new hires Equity reflected in salary structure and in athletic programming/ Shared governance reflected in the decision-making process
	3	Processes exist to allow integrity-related issues to surface for discussion, review and action	Academic Senate/ Peer review/ Advisory Councils Department meetings/ College committee structure
"I"	4	Nurture of an institutional climate where integrity-related issues can be challenged at any level without defensiveness or fear of reprisal	Challenging an issue is not seen as attacking an individual/Mutual respect promotes open discussion of both rights and responsibilities associated with shared governance

Integrity-Based Questions Addressing The Large "I"

- Is the College's commitment to access reflected in its assessment and placement procedures, as well as curricular offerings, scheduling patterns and support services?
- Is the College's desire to create a collegial climate reflected in its willingness to:
  - — decentralize the decision-making process?
  - — foster open lines of communication?
  - — honor decisions made as a result of shared governance?
- Does a bargaining group's desire for solidarity among members lead staff to overlook a colleague's work-related improprieties?
- Are students taught by part-time faculty provided an experience comparable to those taught by full-time faculty?
- Are state mandates overlooked by administration because they are perceived as having a negative impact on enrollment?
- Is the College's commitment to cultural diversity reflected in a commensurate effort to attract minority students and a diverse full-time staff?
- Does the College collaborate with the community to address issues in the educational spectrum, or does it operate in relative isolation?

Among the 11 newly-adopted strategic directions were three with particular relevance to the integrity self-study committee's charges. These three reflected the following:

- a commitment to access to education for all who could benefit;
- a collegial climate that supports open communication, maintains trust, and encourages the development of staff potential; and
- an atmosphere that encourages cultural diversity and fosters multicultural experiences.

The self-study committee is completing its assessment of institutional integrity by examining the College's commitment in its practices and relationships to these strategic directions. Framing these directions into integrity-based questions is not yet complete although possibilities have been drafted and are included in Table 2. By pursuing this focus and conducting the assessment of integrity previously explained as the second level of review, the committee believes it will address its charge in a thorough manner.

The fourth and highest level of integrity, also identified by the big "I," should be viewed as an institutional state of mind, rather than an institutional outcome. This level of integrity occurs when students, support staff, faculty and administration share the perception that institutional actions and communications reflect integrity. This level of performance is evident in institutions that nurture professional challenge without defensiveness or fear of reprisal. Colleges that intentionally pursue such a strategic climate are more likely to be developmentally advanced with respect to integrity than those that avoid the issue.

Conclusion

Academic institutions are founded on premises associated with the big "I," but as they expand, this vision becomes less clear. More staff, increasing numbers of students, more administrative layers, larger budgets, and expanding curricula and physical plants sometimes make the big "I" less accessible, or so it seems.

As a college pursues the big "I," three important points emerge. First, the letter "i" sounds like a word in the English language that defines an integral part of the anatomy that allows one to see. Eyes allow one to see into, see clearly, see what is wrong, see what is right, and most important, choose to see whether an institution has continued its quest for integrity.

Second, institutions are primarily made up of people, people whose vision for their institutions hopefully reflects their own integrity. Each member of an academic community has an obligation to see to that.

And finally, for an institution to maintain the big "I," it must promote the belief among all associated with that institution that "I" can make a difference in the way people are treated, in the quality of education provided, and in the way institutional integrity is valued.

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Institutional Policy and the Fifth Criterion: An Avenue to Accountability

Carol A. Gorsuch
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The 1993-94 draft *Handbook of Accreditation—Selected Chapters* rightly notes in the section under Criterion Five that institutions of higher education are as "vulnerable to error as are all other social institutions." It is certainly clear that recent highly publicized lapses in institutional integrity have led to increased calls for accountability from the publics served by higher education. This call for an increased attention to ethics and accountability comes not just from the regional accrediting associations such as NCA, but also from the U.S. Congress and the Secretary of Education in the form of the HEA Amendments of 1992 and recently promulgated regulations that apply to the new State Postsecondary Review Entity (SPRE).

The NCA Commission on Institutions of Higher Education has defined "integrity" to mean that institutions will adhere both to the civil laws and to the code of ethics commonly accepted by the academic community. It also notes some of the values that commonly reflect integrity, including the following:

- expressing the ethical values it has adopted through institutional policies and procedures made public in its public documents and contractual arrangements;
- ensuring that its practices are consistent with its publicly stated policies;
- practicing full disclosure in its dealing with the members of the institution and its publics; and
- living up to the commitments it makes in all its public representations.

To meet the Commission's new criterion on institutional integrity, many, perhaps most, institutions will necessarily focus initial attention on the highly public documents emanating from their organizations: catalogs, schedules of classes, viewbooks, and various other marketing pieces. But as important as these publications are, in the long term, the formal language and processes that broadly encompass an institution's policy *framework*—policies, regulations, and procedures—are crucial to defining integrity and accountability, and a critically important link in the effort to ensure consumer protection.

Pima County Community College District is the sixth largest multi-campus community college in the U.S., enrolling nearly 60,000 students annually in credit and non-credit programs in its service area in southern Arizona. Like almost all other institutions of higher education, the college district has had policies adopted and approved by its publicly elected Board of Governors since the institution's inception twenty-five years ago. Over time, the College also developed a wide variety of procedures (called "standard practice guides" or "SPGs" at Pima Community College) and administrative regulations. Unfortunately, as in any large organization that is constantly evolving to try to better meet its students' needs, different policy, regulation, and SPG documents in different parts of the college suffered from a lack of uniform development, marketing, and institutionalization.

A college's policy framework touches virtually every aspect of institutional life, and a project seeking to review and renew the processes attendant to that framework cannot be undertaken lightly. Michael Fullan, author of *The*

New Meaning of Educational Change (2nd ed.; Teachers College Press, 1991, p. 63) speaks to the kinds of changes attempted in American school reform, and in so doing, provides a taxonomy of organizational change that can be usefully applied to the kinds of processes that must be undertaken in a policy framework renewal project. Fullan has posited that change projects must first assess the *relevance* (that is, both the practicality and need), the *readiness* levels (i.e., the "practical and conceptual capacity to initiate, develop, or adopt a given innovation"), and the *resources* available to underpin the project. Indeed, not only is such an assessment vital, but may usefully be incorporated into the development process for the project.

Pima Community College has attempted to address this very issue in a major multi-year project that is, as Fullan would characterize it, a "second-order change" where one seeks "to alter the fundamental ways in which organizations are put together, including new goals, structures, and roles" (p. 29). Among the processes developed to support this project have been the following:

- commissioned a study of the college's policy development and implementation system;
- exhaustively inventoried and updated all extant policies;
- proposed a newly reissued policy manual to all significant employee stakeholder groups prior to Board approval;
- established an office of policy and information services;
- established a process that ensures that all appropriate constituencies are consulted and provided training for new regulations and "standard practice guides";
- made all Board-approved policies, regulations, and "standard practice guides" available in all college offices via the campus computer network;
- made these same documents available to any member of the public via dial-up or Internet access; and
- implemented a comprehensive review process for each type of document to ensure ongoing currency.

The ongoing implementation of these processes will help ensure that Pima Community College is able to address several of the ways identified by the Commission in which an institution's integrity can be manifested. Although both labor- and resource-intensive, Pima Community College believes that its policy framework renewal project is helping in its efforts to give prominence to ethical policy and decision-making and to become more accountable to its many publics.

Appendix

Pima Community College's policy, regulation, and standard practice guide (SPG) databases are available for consultation by any member of the NCA Commission on Institutions of Higher Education via the Internet. The telnet address is "pimacc.pima.edu". When prompted for a "Username," type "PIMAINFO." The databases are available under the broad heading "College Information and Services" at the main menu. For further information, contact Robert K. Baker, (520) 748-4989 (E-mail: bbaker@pimacc.pima.edu).

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Ebony, Ivory, Singing in Perfect Harmony: Re-examining the Issue of Diversity

Lisa Sims-Brandom

"Ebony, ivory, singing in perfect harmony," sang Stevie Wonder and Paul McCartney in the well-known and best-selling duet performance of the 1980's. For the idealists among us, those lyrics reflected hope for a world in the future that would put all race, ethnic, and gender bias behind us. Coincidentally during that same time period, colleges and universities were placing emphasis upon multicultural education as a possible method of obtaining that goal. Today we are entering into the "second generation" of the multicultural movement, and it is vital that we reflect, as a body of educators, upon its initial objectives. Have we indeed made progress toward that elusive goal of "perfect harmony," or is it simply a myth that has no hope of fulfillment? What have we accomplished in the past twenty years with our emphasis on diversity? Where have we been, but more importantly, where are we going with the movement as we approach the 21st century? Are we in danger, as the counter-culture representatives of the late 1960's of simply admitting that change is unlikely and returning to the status quo? I submit that a careful examination of three key areas may give us some insight into the current status of diversity in America today and can provide some answers to the questions just raised. These areas include reflecting (institutional as well as personal), redesigning curriculum (beyond the earlier special studies courses to an inclusive, transformational curriculum), and reactivating campus awareness (utilizing innovative ideas to communicate goals and promote understanding). If we can examine and honestly answer these questions for ourselves, it may still be possible for us to sing, work, play, and perhaps even pray together in "perfect harmony."

Historically, we have recognized America as a pluralistic and diverse nation. We have consistently used the traditional "melting pot" imagery in our speeches and writing to convey the idea of *pluribus unum*—"out of many we can become one." Ironically, though, we have used the concept to squeeze a diverse population into only one acceptable mold, which is Western European, Anglo, and Protestant. James Banks, an authority in multicultural education, recently noted, however, that "coerced assimilation does not work very well" (1994). Nonmainstream populations simply do not perceive this mold as legitimate since it seems to have no moral authority and appears to be inconsistent with democratic ideals. It is Bank's premise, as well as ours, that a democratic society must, of necessity, learn to "negotiate and share power as diverse peoples" (1994). We have learned in the past two decades that multicultural education is a vehicle that we can use effectively as educators to transform our nation's institutions.

As we reflect upon our own institution's progress toward our two-fold goal: creating an assimilated, cohesive, democratic society while allowing its "citizens to maintain their ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic, and primordial identities" (Banks 1994), we must assess the past, the present, and the future. A common set of criteria, which I have labeled as dimensions, could be used as a scoring rubic for each of our institutions.

- Dimension one is simply to ignore ethnic, gender, and racial differences. Unfortunately, for most of our educational history, this dimension has been our position.
- By the mid part of the century, however, we moved to dimension two, which is to study only those outstanding individuals from nonmainstream populations who have made contributions that benefit the

majority of society. Who among us did not study the contributions of George Washington Carver and others who made enormous contributions to society by the sacrifice of their lives and work for the greater cause of society?

- Dimension three occurred in the late 1960's and early 1970's through the civil rights movement, the feminist movement, and the realization that a global perspective was necessary to live in the latter part of the twentieth century. Dimension three is perceived to be the beginning of the multicultural movement in America since its stance is to recognize that the minority perspective form the majority and focus exclusively upon it such as creating special studies courses or devoting sections or chapters in textbook to the issues.

- Dimension four, represented by curriculum revision in the late 70's and all of the 80's, is to separate the minority perspective from the majority and focus exclusively upon it such as creating special studies courses or devoting sections or chapters in a textbook to the issues.

- Dimension five, occurring in the 1990's, is to include both minority and majority perspectives through a university, text, or course, assigning parallel and equal importance to both (Gardner and Jewler 1992). The evolutionary process, as delineated through the five dimensions, can be considered complete only if we have successfully mastered dimension five. Since the process is evolutionary in nature, however, we may want to raise a new question in our assessment of our institutional positions within the dimensions. What will dimension six be? Will we begin, as many have predicted for art, music, theater, and film to revert to a more conservative position? Some universities, such as the University of Oregon in its recently publicized dispute over the multicultural curriculum, want less instead of more. One professor was quoted as saying, "People pushing for multiculturalism have become more extreme and greedy over the years" (Leatherman 1994). One aspect that we can count on is that change is inevitable, and the dialogue it creates must be open, honest, and healthy as we reexamine the issue of diversity.

Once we have analyzed our institution's past and present response to diversity, it is imperative that we also reflect upon our own personal stance as administrators and professors in the colleges and universities in which we serve. One way to do this is to sit down and write out one's own philosophy regarding diversity—thinking about the values and perspectives that we hold and how we arrived at those values. The process for me was enlightening and brought back memories that I had simply erased from my mind for years. The following excerpt from this memoir delineates my changing voice on the issue of muticulturalism.

Oddly enough, until I was 15, I had not thought of the issues [multicultural] at all and had simply spoken with the voice of the Anglo society in which I lived. I was living with my grandmother at the time. One of the lawyers in our town gave me an opportunity to work for him on Saturdays by just being in the office in case someone should drop by or the phone would ring. He paid me $5 a Saturday. As you might expect, the job was extremely boring. I entertained myself by reading the transcripts of courts cases. The one which changed my life was the Emmett Till murder. This story represents a sad chapter in Mississippi crime history. Emmett Till was a fourteen year old African-American from the North who was visiting relatives in Mississippi for the summer. According to court testimony, he made the mistake of looking at an Anglo woman in the face one day, simply unheard of action by Mississippi African-Americans who were to keep their eyes on the ground at all times when speaking to Anglos, especially women. Because of this action, Emmett Till was taken into the countryside in Tallahatchie County and hanged. Three Anglo men from the county were put on trial for the murder; the lawyer for whom I worked was one of the defense attorneys. After a trial that went on for a number of weeks and caught the attention of the national media, the men were acquitted. As I read the court transcript, it seemed to become increasingly clear to me that a great injustice had been doubly apparent to the judge, the jurors, and the whole county. When I asked the lawyer directly, " How could the jury acquit these men when they were obviously guilty?" I'll never forget his reply. He looked at me, without smiling, as if I had breached some sort of sacred trust between us Mississippians and replied, "This is Mississippi."

For me, that statement came to represent an awakening in my life and the beginning of a voice that would be different from the majority of the Anglo community in which I lived. If " This is Mississippi" did I want to stay a part of it? I decided I did not. At the age of 17, the day after my graduation from high school, I left the state, moved to Kansas to live a short time with my mother and stepfather, and got a job.

After reflecting upon our institutional and personal positions, the next step is redesigning the curriculum to meet the goal of creating a cohesive, democratic society that celebrates its diversity. Ways in which this step has been accomplished in the past twenty years include not only content integration (as we discussed in dimension four) but also through "knowledge construction," "prejudice reduction," "equitable pedagogy," "empowering school cultural and social structure," and a "transformation approach." "Knowledge construction" means that professors assist students in understanding how differing perspectives of people have influenced their conclusions. "Prejudice reduction" centers on presenting positive role models of diverse groups and using these materials consistently. "Equitable pedagogy" focuses on the use of multiple teaching methods to reach diverse populations. Research has shown that cooperative teaching activities foster achievement in African-American and Mexican-American students (Aronson and Gonzalez 1988). "Empowering school cultural and social structure" centers upon the extent to which an institution supports equality and actually empowers diverse groups. The newest method is a "transformation approach" that views subject matter from the perspective of a range of groups. Students—who have been exposed in the past to traditional Anglo knowledge only—now begin to participate actively in interpreting history (Banks 1994).

Many colleges and universities have also sought to be proactive in multicultural curricular offerings by expanding or revising courses recently. Many have made these courses general education requirements. The University of Richmond's interdisciplinary course incorporates texts from four areas: the West, East Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. An additional course component is that students attend cultural events. Samford University's "Cornerstone" curriculum is a 20-hour component over a three year period that exposes the students to a region's history and distinctive culture (Stern 1994). The widely publicized University of Oregon's final decision on multicultural courses, after its long debate and a year's delay in implementation, requires students to take courses from three areas: "American Cultures," "Pluralism and Tolerance," and "International Cultures" (Leatherman 1994). The course offerings of a university, although varied in many ways, will reflect the institution's commitment to an inclusive curriculum and will serve as an important indicator of its progress.

A third and final area to focus on as we examine the issue of diversity is that of reactivating campus awareness. Colleges and universities have responded over the past twenty years to this challenge in many ways including "offering courses in minority studies, hiring more minority faculty and counselors, bringing minority students from elementary and secondary schools to campus so that they will feel more comfortable about applying for admission later on, targeting some financial aid for minority students, incorporating counseling strategies in which counselors from one racial group are trained to counsel students of difference race, providing resource centers for the support of all students having academic difficulties, recognizing the legitimacy and needs of minority standards, and publicly declaring support for a truly integrated college or university" (Gardner and Jewler 1992).

More recent ideas that have proved successful in communicating goals and promoting understanding include forums and focus groups to foster an open dialogue among diverse groups. Anglo student, for example, can be led to realize that they need to pay attention to what Christine Sleeter refers to as "white racial bonding"—interactions that affirm a common stance in racial issues and draw "we-they" boundaries (1994). Students may also benefit from actively being paired for sports or academic teams to accomplish common objectives. Even college bookstores are promoting multiculturalism by stocking their shelves with items that reflect ethnic diversity. As one executive put it, "Build sales and build understanding" (Blumenstyk 1993). Universities may also want to consider reaffirming their position on affirmative action as a way of selecting diverse student and faculty populations from among qualified candidates.

As we move into the 21st century and assess our progress in building an inclusive society in America, we all share the dream of building classroom and co-curricular environments where students are active participants in their leaning, places where all participants accept other cultures and races, places where there can be true communion with one another. The powerful final scene in the film *Places in the Heart,* without words, gave us a visual picture of what a perfect earthly paradise could be—all race, culture, and gender bias forever abolished in an environment of "perfect harmony" For those of us who are truly committed to diversity, we will accept nothing less. We simply cannot revert to the status quo. Diversity, of necessity, must be more not less. Students must not only come to understand other cultures but also understand the one in which they live. They must see that diversity is "about what we share as well as about what sets us apart" (Cheney 1994). Only then can we, as Americans, truly be "ebony, ivory, singing in perfect harmony."

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Education, Diversity, and TQM: The Importance and the Connection

Alex A. Sanchez

Of all the leadership and management theories that emerged in the 1970's and the 1980's, the one holding the most promise for dealing successfully with diversity in the work force is Total Quality Management (TQM). TQM has the proper philosophical basis and effective organizational techniques to make diversity a source of strength for America. This management strategy values differences in team member attributes and stresses a less formal organizational structure.

TQM has been readily received by American business, not only because it increases efficiency and productivity, but because it shares a philosophy about work, people, and relationships very much in keeping with the ideals of democracy that anyone in this country has a chance at making it. For too long the achievement of the *American dream* has not reflected the true diversity of the country. By adopting TQM as a philosophical base and its techniques as operating procedures we will begin to value and respect the dignity and creativity of each member of the *team*. As collaboration and cooperation become the methods used to relate with each other in an organization—be it educational, cultural, social or business—we will be forced to reexamine the class system that debilitates and demoralizes our work force. We also must look at organizational structures and practices that limit real collaboration by rank and privilege. As people aspire to greater achievement because of a weakening of hierarchy and a broadening of participation in problem-solving and decision-making, the overall performance and competitiveness of America's organizations will improve. As we change the focus from individual performance to team performance, overall results will improve. Focus on team performance means bringing everyone into the game and results in greater diversity.

Education, like American industry, is faulted for lack of attention to quality. Likewise, both have come under criticism because of lack of attention to the growing diversity in the American population. The response has been to comply with affirmative action programs. Diversity programs differ from affirmative action programs in that the latter are initiated by the government and require either compliance or penalties. Diversity programs, on the other hand, are voluntary. They are motivated by the desire to achieve quality, satisfy customers and generate a cost-effective product or service. Quality cannot be achieved without people. A well designed diversity program can help create a culture in which diversity is valued and well-managed.

Colleges and universities are human resource suppliers to industry and it is in our best interest to meet their requirements. Yet we continue to supply American industry with graduates who do not mirror the changes in American society. American industry, for the most part, understands that it is indeed in global competition. However, higher education continues to provide industry with graduates who are monolingual and who are neither truly knowledgeable about or accepting of the multiplicity of cultures and races not only within our borders but the world in general. Schools continue to produce graduates who have contact with very few professors and senior managers who reflect this diversity in spite of a growing number of so-called minority/majority states and environments. Examples can be found in the undergraduate student body of the University of California-Berkeley as well as scores of community colleges nationwide. Companies and institutions that do not value diversity risk losing marketshare, experience a downward trend in employee morale, see a lessening of innovation from employees, and consequently, are unable to recruit the most talented workforce. Just like in TQM, a major ingredient in the success of diversity is the enthusiasm of the chief executive officer and top management support for the program. That support includes a commitment to sharing power and control with an empowered workforce—in the case of higher education the group includes faculty, support staff, students, advisory committees, trustees, and others.

Every institution of higher learning must go through intensive self-assessment of its ability to deal with diversity and inclusiveness. It is interesting that colleges and universities often lag behind their for-profit counterparts in the advancement of women and people of color. The slow response of educators shows they do not understand the problem. It is ironic that not until colleges and universities serve as role models of nondiscriminatory behavior will society truly change its own behavior and the broader attempts at human and global understanding will be successful. The gap between what our colleges and universities produce in terms of learning outcomes and diversity of their graduates and what industry requires is very real. The longer we refuse to seriously address this gap, the more drag it will be on our economy and global competitiveness.

One tenet of TQM is that performance that gets measured can be improved and goals can be met. This implies strong management practices—a traditionally weak area in higher education. The fact is that colleges and universities do not set tough, quantitative goals for themselves. They do not monitor their performance in most areas including diversity, and they do not exhibit the capacity to act on their deficiencies. The adoption of TQM in education does require additional skills. Most corporations invest significantly in training and development in order to meet quality improvement goals such as diversity. Most institutions of higher learning invest very little in training and development of their people.

In TQM, work processes are reviewed not by distant managers or external evaluators, but by the people closest to the processes—those who do the work itself and those who are affected by those processes. In the case of higher education, only students experience the extended process. Today's educators should think of education as a seamless web, each part flowing without interruption from one cell to the next; a seamless flow from home to elementary school to high school to college to work, and back again to education as a life-long process.

It should go without saying that teachers at all levels need to know the backgrounds, interests, and preparation of students entering their classes. They also need to know what students need to take from their class into the next level. If one is going to empower students, they have to know how they are doing. Classroom assessment is the continuous collection of information. But it only becomes empowering when the data are shared with students. Feedback on students' learning helps students understand how well they have learned and also provides teachers with information about how effectively they have taught the class. In the process, the teacher also comes to understand and appreciate the diversity present in each class. Knowledge of that diversity empowers the teacher to use techniques appropriate to each class member. Once faculty begin to conduct assessment of their teaching it is only natural that they will discuss their findings with colleagues. This will lead to the questioning of teaching and its impact on learning with the aim of improvement of teaching and the enhancement of learning. Teaching and learning becomes a truly collaborative activity that is put into the hands of the people who do the work of teaching and learning—students and faculty. Education is compatible with TQM because the assumption is that teachers want to teach as well as they can, and students want to do the best job of learning that they can. Taking charge of the learning process empowers both students and teachers. By empowering students in the learning process, teachers are also validating the differences that students bring with them into the classroom. Teachers approach the teaching process from the basis of data about each student, including what each student wants and needs to get from the class.

We bring diversity into the classroom by knowing the needs of students, their learning styles, and their actual learning day-by-day, and by involving students in the actual work of the classroom and the institutions. Examples are involving students as tutors, teaching assistants, mentors, registration assistants, health office workers, etc. If they become deeply involved in the essence of TQM, students will make sure the processes work. They will de-bug the systems. The same thing is true for faculty.

We need diversity in our teachers—some can do research, some can teach well, some are great coaches and mentors, some are good at community service, and some can and should be role models for their students. This is especially true for institutions that include significant numbers of minority students. Without those role models or sympathetic faculty who identify with their culture, it is very difficult for minority students to achieve socialization in their educational experience, a process necessary for success in the college experience.

Socialization, in short, is that process by which a person feels part of his/her environment and has a sense of belonging in that particular place. This has been a more severe handicap for minority students to overcome than even such formidable obstacles as adequate financial aid. The track record of college and universities in attracting minorities into the faculty is dismal. Studies also show that co-curricular learning activities directly complement formal coursework. Leadership of student organizations, internships, developmental seminars, work experience, and other campus activities provide valuable learning opportunities that contribute to the development of desired student abilities. Activities in which minorities and women have a significant role will help advance the process of socialization of the institution. A change in paradigm such as that represented by TQM holds the promise of bringing about change appropriate to the magnitude of the problem. In fact, diversity may be our most powerful secret weapon in global competition.

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The Development of the Female Administrator: Surviving in a Male–Dominated Environment

Patricia Kapper
Susan Friedberg

Overview

Female administrators or those women considering administrative positions in the 90s and beyond as well as the entire higher education community need to be aware of gender differences in leadership styles and the impact of those differences on the careers of women within higher education administration. In the past, negative stereotypes of female management have served as barriers to advancement (Mirides, E. & Cote, A., 1980; Friedberg, S.L., 1989). However, the successful female administrator can maximize effectiveness through the nurturing of those qualities traditionally seen as feminine. As female administrators, we need to increase awareness regarding the appropriateness of those qualities in the pursuit of effective management (Bracey, H. et al, 1990; McFarland, L.J. et al, 1993). These qualities, successfully nurtured through a process of mentoring and formal leadership development programs, have the potential to produce a more androgynous leader capable of developing consensus and fostering teamwork. Our administrative experiences within a male–dominated environment validate this premise.

Issues

Leadership styles tend to differ along gender lines. When measured through the use of a personality type indicator, men and women strongly differ on the Thinking–Feeling dimension (North, J. D., 1991). What this means is that men and women will probably approach decision-making from a different perspective and that men and women seeking to make decisions together will be coming at that decision from a different perspective. Men, with the stronger "thinking" orientation, will logically and objectively approach issues while women will "use feelings in their discourse" (p. 49). This male–female dichotomy "presents . . . opportunities for misunderstanding or failure in group and interpersonal settings" (p. 49). How do we avoid such failure? The first step is to create an awareness of those differences while concurrently demonstrating a willingness to work together to achieve a goal. The increasing amounts of research on this topic validate its existence, helping both "men and women learn to understand each other, respect each others' styles, and slowly modify opinions and behaviors to accommodate" differences (p. 52).

As one reads the literature, the evidence of the differences between genders becomes a reality as one begins to relate it to one's own experience. There is an abundance of discussion about communication styles and how women and men differ in its use. For example, women use communication to establish relationships while men use communication to establish status. Men tend to function vertically within the organization completely cognizant of and comfortable within the chain of command. Women are more prone to function horizontally within the organization through established relationships. This is exemplified in the way women talk about others "with whom they work" rather than "for whom they work" or "who work for them." Status or positioning is less important to women who tend to have a greater desire to be a part of the team.

Women and men also tend to differ in the ways in which they reason. While women may even be accused of feeling and not thinking, what they really are doing is taking a scan of the total environment in which a decision is to be made. This may include consideration of the ways in which relationships will be affected by a given decision. In this way they operate inductively, "examin[ing] the reality, its context and pieces, and then make...meaning of the whole," (North, p. 50). Men, on the other hand, tend to deductively determine the desired outcome, bringing it to reality through their own planning (p. 50). Women's need to examine the total context in which a decision is to be made means that they may respond and adapt to the reality that is rather than to that which they wish it to be (North, and Jones, 1987). A greater flexibility in decision making is probably a by-product of this more inductive approach, however. Ironically, when women are explicit in establishing and stating their goals and objectives and are assertive in their actions to accomplish them, they are sometimes seen as aggressive, even though their actions are similar to those of their male counterparts (Hersi, 1993).

Ultimately, women seem more comfortable helping facilitate problem-solving rather than being the one who gives the order to solve it in a predetermined way (Burton, 1993). This comfort with facilitating problem solving may derive from another key difference, which is the female emphasis on fostering relationships. While obviously men as well may place a premium on relationships in decision-making, women are more inclined to foster relationships in an effort to build consensus and arrive at collaboratively made decisions. Kouzes and Pozner (1987) postulate that leaders excel by "stressing collaboration and teamwork" to arrive at shared goals. Thus, women's inate attention to relationships and their concern for the team provide them with a unique opportunity to operate effectively in the current administrative environment.

With all of these differences, how do women learn to function effectively within a male–dominated environment? Probably the best way is to attend any one of the many leadership development programs for women. The best known include the Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration which is jointly sponsored by the Higher Education Resource Service and Bryn Mawr College; the National Institute for Leadership Development; the American Council on Education's National Identification Program for the Advancement of Women in Higher Education Administration. Although the cost, length, and intensity of these programs may vary, all of them were designed to give women the skills they need to function in an administrative capacity; to establish a support network of professional females; and to assist with the professional development of women in preparation for advancement within the higher education community. Research has shown that these programs have successfully achieved their goals.

Additionally, most of these programs include a mentoring component whereby each participant is to work with someone from their organization who can provide them with visibility and assist them with their skill development. In the early years of these programs, the mentors tended to be male, but now that more women have moved into upper level administrative positions, women are mentoring other women as well.

Our Challenge

The challenges for women seeking to operate effectively and successfully within the administration of higher education are many. They begin with our need to create an awareness of our gender differences and identify ways for men and women to celebrate those differences for the betterment of the organization. Secondly, we need to network with other women, mentoring and supporting them as they move into the administrative ranks. What we must *never* do is compromise who we are for the sake of surviving in a male–dominated environment.

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Chapter X

Partnerships with Other Educational Institutions

The Educational Alliance of Pueblo

J. Michael Ortiz

In 1991, the superintendent of Public School District #60 from Pueblo, Colorado, issued a request for input and a challenge to the citizens of Pueblo to recommend methods for improving the schools. Robert C. Shirley, the President of the University of Southern Colorado (USC), took the challenge one step further and presented a bold new approach to the educational process in Pueblo, Colorado. The plan called for establishing an alliance between the university and the school district that would go beyond any existing school/college collaboration project. The major focus of this proposal was the creation of a seamless Pre K–16 educational system. This co–equal partnership became the Educational Alliance of Pueblo. The members of the Board of Education were impressed with the plan and voted to attempt it.

The first step in the incorporation of the plan was the development of a broadbased community committee to develop a strategic plan for the school district that included the proposed Alliance. From the strategic plan a task force emerged whose charge was to review the operation of the district and recommend efficiencies that would result in savings that, in turn, could be redirected toward educational activities. The task force membership included representatives of the school district, the university, and the business community. The group became the Restructuring and Reallocation Task Force (RRTF). The task force was allowed to review only the operational budget or about a quarter of the total district budget. The instructional budget was not part of the review. The directors of the various units within the district were requested to make presentations to the task force and to focus on one basic question: "How does what you do impact student learning?" With this as a common ground, the task force proceeded to identify $4.1 million in savings through efficiencies (many of which were actually recommended by the unit directors). Because these were funds from the operational budget, the district will continue to reallocate this money **annually** directly to the schools for distribution by the Site Based Shared Decision Making Committee (SBSDM) at each building. A portion of the savings is reserved to address district wide projects, i.e., educational technology, staff development, strategic planning, etc. The SBSDM committees were established by the RRTF as a recommended efficiency to decentralize administrative functions and reduce the need for central office staff (2). These SBSDM committees are made up of teachers, the principals, parents and non–parent members of the community that is served by the school. For many schools it has actually doubled their budget for educational support.

In order to maintain a cutting edge knowledge of the reform movement as it related to school/college collaboration, a National Advisory Board (NAB) was formed. The purpose of the board is to provided guidance to the Alliance and to provide feedback on the current activities and those proposed. The members of the NAB are: Dr. Terrell H. Bell, former Secretary of Education; Dr. John Goodlad, Professor and Director, Center for Educational Renewal, University of Washington; Mr. Keith Geiger, President, NEA; Ms. Lucie Fjeldstad, President, Fjeldstad International; Dr. Manuel Gomez, Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, University of California, Irvine; Dr. Manuel Justiz, Dean College of Education, University of Texas at Austin; Dr. Arturo Madrid, The Murchison Distinguished Professor, Trinity University; Dr. Frank Newman, President, Education Commission of the States; Dr. Allan Oster, former President of AASCU; Mr. Roy Romer, Governor, State of Colorado; Mr. Al Shanker, President, American Federation of Teachers; Dr. Blenda Wilson, President, California State University–Northridge; Dr. Albert Yates, Chancellor, Colorado State University System; Dr. Dwayne Nuzum, Executive Director, Colorado Commission on Higher Education; and, Dr. William Randall, Commissioner of Education, State of Colorado. These outstanding board members not only provide professional input, but because of their national involvement, are able to share their observations of reform from a national perspective. This collective wisdom provides a broad perspective to the current and proposed activities of the Alliance. The NAB convenes annually in Pueblo, but members of the board are called upon more frequently to visit the community and to lend their professional expertise to the project.

Of course, two entities as diverse as a public school system and a university require more than just good ideas and a willingness to collaborate, the governing boards of the respective institutions had to be willing to embrace this bold plan. In the case of the university it was the State Board of Agriculture, while the school district had its elected Board of Education. The respective boards approved the plan and signed a contractual agreement that solidified the Alliance as a legal entity. As part of the Alliance, the superintendent was also named as a vice president of the university. This title does not reflect a reporting line to the president, but more closely acknowledges the relationship of the school district to the university. The organizational structure is presented in Appendix A.

Governor Roy Romer formally announced the formation of the Educational Alliance of Pueblo in July 1991. He pledged to assist this co–equal partnership in whatever ways he could. This included but was not limited to waiving state requirements that impeded the progress of the Alliance.

A centerpiece of the Alliance was to be immediate linkages between the school district and the university. The original seven linkages were formed to explore how these cooperative programs could benefit all of the principals from both entities. A focused, concerted effort to effectively utilize the resources of both organizations to meet mutually established goals was put into place. These first linkages includes the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), which houses the university's teacher preparation program. The CTL is staffed by eight tenure track faculty, four teachers on special assignment from the school district, university faculty from the academic disciplines, and a position jointly funded for staff development/student teaching coordination. This structure seeks to integrate real world application of the training that is presented to the preservice teachers by utilizing the teachers on special assignment to instruct in the pedagogy of their respective area of expertise. The university faculty benefit from being exposed to current research on effective instructional methods while the teachers on special assignment develop more depth in their fields through their interaction with the academic faculty.

A team of science educators from the district and the university participate in the **Curriculum Articulation in the Sciences linkage**. They aim to clarify the content, scope, sequence, and standards for the science curriculum at both institutions.

A grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) Science Education for Every Kid (SEEK) program is enabling every elementary school teacher in the district to receive in–service training on science education. By the end of the 1994–95 school year, they all will be better prepared to enhance science education in sensitive and lively ways for all children, and particularly for female and minority students.

Through a two–year Department of Energy Pre–Freshman Enrichment Program (PREP) grant, university faculty worked on exciting science projects with sixth– and seventh–grade students, most of whom were female, black, and/or Hispanic, and encouraged those students to pursue a science major in college.

The linkage also has produced grant support from the Coors Foundation to establish the Center for the Advancement of Teaching Science, Mathematics and Technology (CATSMT), a resource center for all district teachers; the NSF–funded Colorado Science Teacher Enhancement Program (CO–STEP); and the NSF–supported CONNECT program, which encourages student achievement in science and mathematics according to state– and nationally-supported standards.

Through the **Student Mentor Project linkage**, university students serve as mentors to high–risk, but academically capable, district students. The linkage strives to increase the likelihood that high–risk students will graduate from high school and continue on to college. USC student mentors, many of whom were considered at–risk themselves at one time, receive significant community service experience from participating in the program. In the first two years, 45 USC students mentored 135 district students in the program.

Another of the original linkages is the Senior to Sophomore program (STS). Through this program, college level courses are delivered on the campus of the high schools. The program was developed in response to a program established by the legislature entitled the Post–Secondary Options Program. This program allows high school juniors and seniors to commute to the university campus and to enroll in course work approved by the district and receive dual credit. While the program is very positive, it suffers from some problems, in particular, one of access. Some high schools do not have ready access to the USC campus. Since the STS course work is delivered on the high school campus, it eliminates the access problem. High school faculty who meet the requirements for part–time faculty status in the respective university departments deliver the college curriculum for dual credit in the high schools. Enrollment has doubled every year that the program has been in place and it appears that it will continue on into the future as more classes are offered. A full–time faculty from the respective discipline meets with the part–time faculty to develop the syllabus and other course materials. As the faculty liaison, he/she will also meet with the instructor/class at least 10 times per semester. The result of this linkage has been the increased collaboration among faculties, the natural articulation of curricula, increased dialogue about exit standards from high school and entrance standards at the university, and a tremendous amount of support from the community. Thus far STS parents have saved over $135,000 in tuition.

The original list of seven immediate linkages has expanded to 20. Practically all of these linkages have been the result of bottom up proposals to improve the educational environment at the institutions. Some of the linkages go well beyond the educational program per se and include partnerships that combine functions to increase efficiency and generate funds for educational purposes. In addition to those previously addressed, a listing with a short description follows.

- **The Summer Leadership Institute** linkage has taken place on the USC campus for two weeks each August since 1992. Approximately 120 sixth– and seventh–grade students have participated to date in the program, which focuses on helping students to develop their leadership potential, social skills, and planning skills.

  Recently, the linkage evolved into the Southern Colorado Leadership Institute, which has received federal and state grant monies to train secondary and postsecondary students in culturally competent, transformational leadership qualities.

- Twenty district schools responded to a recent **Community Volunteers in the Classroom linkage** survey to determine the need for volunteer programs. Once the data have been analyzed, the schools will be provided with information on how to improve community volunteer involvement.

- Through the **Student and Faculty Participation in USC Research linkage**, a small number of high school students and district teachers are encouraged to work with university faculty on research projects to help students increase their interest in the discovery of knowledge.

- The **Pueblo Educational Exchange Program linkage** provides district and university faculty, administrators, and support staff with opportunities to exchange roles and responsibilities for one day to a full academic year.

  Through one such exchange, a university professor gained experience as a part–time elementary school principal, while a principal gained experience in working with district and university faculty through the university–based Center for Teaching and Learning.

- All of the district's high school libraries and the Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences technologically have become branches of the university's library through the **Library Resource Sharing** linkage. DYNIX, a computerized system, provides an integrated on–line catalog and individual circulation processes at all six locations. Books are delivered to sites through the district's courier service.

- The **Music Technology linkage** provides work stations and music computer labs for training, research, development, and instruction to university and district faculty, staff, and students. Six stations are located at the university, and one station is located at each of the district's 33 school sites.

  More than 20 teachers have been trained in the use of music technology so far. The new Center for Music Technology has the potential to become a regional center for the dissemination of such instruction in Southern Colorado.

- A pilot, accelerated reading program has been implemented at two district elementary schools through the **Reading/Language Arts for Chapter I linkage**. The district reshaped the K–5 Summer School Literacy Program to take advantage of university faculty and student involvement.

The linkage capitalized on current research for the most effective ways to teach literacy. The goal is to design and implement a program for first-grade students who have difficulty learning to read and write, and to correlate content of university courses with direct classroom experience in district schools. Participating teachers have the opportunity to earn graduate credit through the project.

- The **Telecommunications Technology linkage** has connected all district high schools and the district's administration building to the university's gateway to INTERNET. The world-wide computer network allows Pueblo's high school students to access information throughout the world for instant educational information.

  The district and the university are connected via frame relay, a new communication technology, in a wide-area network. In fall 1994, access to INTERNET through the network became available to all elementary and middle schools. Instructional television and other educational technology capabilities will be expanded for both institutions through the linkage.

  The linkage committee is developing capability for low-frequency Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS) microwave television, a line-of-sight system with a range of 40 to 50 miles. Pueblo Community College, District No. 70 and KTSC-TV also participate actively in the ITFS project.

- To honor achievement and competition through alumni games, the **Pueblo Classics linkage** has sponsored five athletic events, attracting approximately 550 participating alumni from both institutions and more than 10,000 spectators. The district and university divide the proceeds from each event to support other athletic programs at both institutions.

- Under the **Business Services linkage**, the university and the school district currently share one executive director of facilities management, one purchasing director, one safety officer, two safety technicians, one communications coordinator, a consolidated print shop, and the use of various equipment when practical. By combining and sharing resources, the Business Services linkage increases operational efficiency at both institutions. The district gained a safety office and the university has been spared the expense of maintaining a print shop.

  Administrators who report to both the district and to the university are in a position to spot new ways for both institutions to operate more cost effectively. Both institutions also save annual salary dollars by combining positions. As administrative costs are reduced, more funds become available for direct distribution to the classrooms at both institutions.

- The **Adventure Education linkage** explores the use of ropes courses, camping, backpacking, rock climbing, and mountaineering as tools to improve self-esteem, communication, trust, and leadership among students. Instructors stress cooperation, rather than competition. In addition to the university's existing ropes course, linkage personnel spearheaded the development of two other ropes courses in the district.

- Through the **Visiting Artists linkage**, 20 artistic presentations have been delivered to more than 1,000 district and university students, teachers, and interested community citizens.

  To expand the community's definition of an artist in today's society, guest artists of regional and national reputations are invited to provide exhibitions, presentations, demonstrations, and lectures for the community.

- During the 1994–95 school year, the new **Nursing in the Schools linkage** is being piloted. University nursing students will serve part of their clinical experience at the district's school sites, to help the district better cope with the lack of nursing services at each school. A full-time coordinator of Nursing Services has been hired for the linkage to strengthen the school health program, to coordinate nursing student experiences, and to teach at the university.

- The **Gifted and Talented linkage** encourages excellence in academic achievement through challenging programs. The linkage helps district and university faculty coordinate existing programs and develop new opportunities for students.

One such program, the National Academic League (NAL), strives to recognize middle school scholars through local academic competitions, followed by a nation–wide playoff tournament. Dr. Terrel Bell, an alliance National Advisory Board member, founded the NAL.

In summer 1994, the linkage sponsored the first, week–long "Summer Challenge Program" for middle school students. Instructors helped students explore robotics, photography, rocketry, and other fascinating subjects. Based at Centennial High School, the program also took place on university and community facilities. The university's honors program instructors and students have assisted with the district's Brain Bowl for middle school students.

Current linkage goals include creating professional development opportunities for district teachers in the area of gifted education.

- To facilitate communications between district faculty and university faculty, a **Faculty Senate/ Individual School Communications linkage** has placed a member of each institution's faculty on the other's faculty representative body. One of the most recent activities to evolve from the alliance is the creation of a public charter school, operated by the University of Southern Colorado under a contract with Pueblo School District No. 60.

- Opened in fall 1994, the **Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences** is designed to use effective and innovative teaching techniques to promote rigorous educational goals based on high standards.

PSAS will deliver an integrated curriculum dedicated to improve student learning and to develop an appreciation for quality of life. Currently, grades K – 9 are housed in one school building. By fall 1997, grades 10 – 12 will be added. The curriculum will be developed to create a "seamless" transition from kindergarten through the baccalaureate degree.

Guided by paideia and arts–based principles, the strong community/school partnership intends to create an untracked, enriched educational setting in which all students will succeed. Pronounced "pie–day–uh," paideia is an educational concept based on the ideas of Mortimer Adler, director of the Institute for Philosophical Research. The Greek word means "the upbringing of a child." The philosophy of paideia includes the ideas that "There are no unteachable children," and that "The quality of schooling to which they are entitled is what the wisest parents would wish for their own children." Teaching methods are based on lectures, coaching and seminars.

Rooted in the arts, the program is designed to provide for positive change in thinking and personal development. Skills in reading, writing, math, and science will evolve and be developed naturally, equally, and in harmony with the fine arts core program. Students at all grade levels receive instruction in the arts (dance, theater, music, visual arts and creative writing), foreign language, language arts, mathematics, natural science, social science, and fitness for life.

The goals of the program are:

- to prepare each student to be a life–long learner;
- to prepare each student to earn a living;
- to prepare each student for the duties of citizenship; and
- to prepare students to understand, appreciate, and participate in the beauty of life.

In the charter school's first year, 323 students enrolled. More than 360 students are on a waiting list. The PSAS student body represents the district's diverse population.

As a condition of enrollment, parents are expected to donate 18 hours of service each year to PSAS. To fulfill a graduation requirement, students must dedicate 100 hours to community service.

Because of the unique relationship created by the Alliance, many funding sources look at the project quite favorably. A grants office was established to secure eternal funding and since 1991 more than $5 million has been secured to support Alliance activities. The following are some examples of these.

- **Approximately $60,000 in funding** from the U. S. Department of Education provided 234 district and three university faculty with in-service training in the first year of the three-year **21st Century Mathematical Challenges** project. Faculty attended workshops on math solutions, family math, equals, graphing calculators, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards, and Chapter I Math. The Board of Education approved the adoption of NCTM standards for the district in January 1994.
- The American Association of Higher Education and PEW Charitable Trusts funded the **Community Compact**. Fifteen district and 15 university staff are coordinating the community's educational resources for the improvement of educational achieve-ment and success in grades seven through 14. The six- to eight-year funding total is expected to approximate more than $1.2 million.
- More than a dozen district and university faculty have served nearly 1,000 district students through the **Drop-Out Prevention Program**, a project designed to rethink our educational approaches to drop-out problems and to implement alternative programs.
- In early 1994, the alliance received a $1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to develop the **Pueblo Integrated Continuum Project**, so the schools will be able to offer more hands-on, applied courses. Pueblo Community College, both Pueblo school districts No. 60 and 70, and the university will participate in the program.

  In 1995, Centennial High School intends to re-tool its curriculum through the program to offer more "real-world" skill development for students. The goal of the program is to better prepare students for the skills they need either to obtain and hold jobs after graduation or to pursue higher education.

Buoyed by the inspiring successes of the Alliance so far, the district and university intend to stride confidently ahead with the partnership in the next few years. We plan to:

- Continue to discover new ways to combine human and financial resources. We intend to increase the $3.7 million annual savings—most of which will continue to be channeled directly into the classrooms every year so that site-based committees of teachers and parents can decide how to best ensure educational quality at their respective schools;
- Continue to develop new linkages and programs to improve educational quality;
- Expand the student mentor linkage to the elementary school level;
- Develop new linkages targeted to benefit more elementary schools;
- Develop additional alliance projects to benefit classrooms directly at all grade levels;
- Develop more grants to support bold, new academically beneficial programs; and
- Provide additional grant-writing assistance to district and university staff.

Hundreds of people—faculty, administrators, staff, parents, students, business leaders, board members, other citizens of our community and state, as well as nationally prominent educators—have sculpted the evolution of the Educational Alliance of Pueblo as the unique, new partnership stands today. They have implemented programs and served on committees for curriculum development; site-based, shared decision making; accountability; strategic planning; grants development; and other projects. Both the district and the university benefit from the increased interaction and cooperation between faculty and staff at both institutions. But most importantly, students at both institutions now have more opportunities to learn, to achieve, and to succeed.

By the end of another three years, the shape of the Alliance could change considerably, depending upon what works or what does not. Innovative ideas always are welcome.

We continue to solicit active participation in Alliance activities and suggestions from faculty and staff at both the district and the university. We also are interested in hearing the good thoughts of any parent and/or citizen who has an interest in providing the best possible education for every student in our community.

In the past three years, the Alliance has triggered results that far exceeded our original expectations. For the next three years, the vision is what we, the citizens of Pueblo, Colorado, choose to create together.

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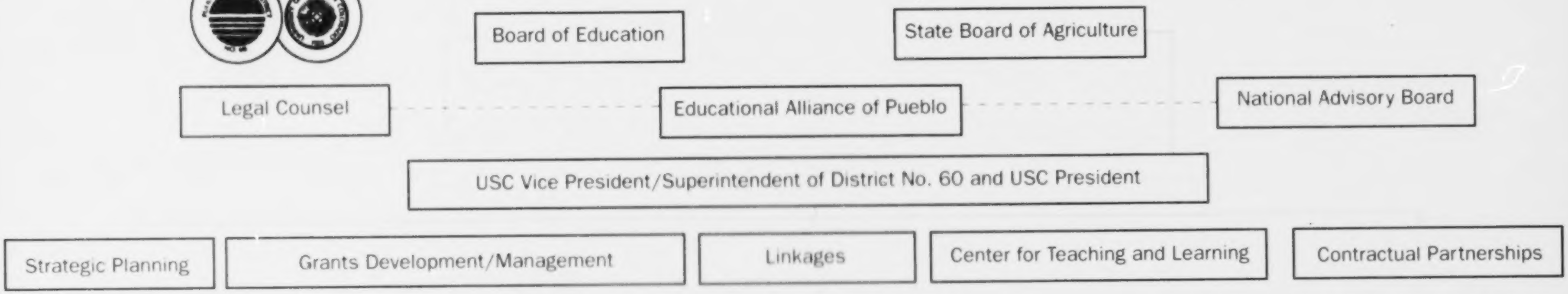
J. Michael Ortiz is Associate Provost, University of Southern Colorado, Pueblo, CO.

Educational Alliance of Pueblo Activity Chart



Board of Education

State Board of Agriculture

Legal Counsel

Educational Alliance of Pueblo

National Advisory Board

USC Vice President/Superintendent of District No. 60 and USC President

Strategic Planning

- Alliance goals and priorities incorporated in district and university strategic plans;
- Restructuring process included within district strategic plan to redistribute approximately $4 million annually to direct classroom support;
- Development of alliance strategic plan;
- Review of alliance activities for harmony with the goals and priorities in both the district's and the university's strategic plans;
- Identification of new activities which will help us to achieve alliance goals and priorities; and
- Periodic review of alliance goals and priorities.

Grants Development/Management

Two full-time grant proposal writers now in place; targets/priorities established by oversight committee; implemented by district/university faculty and staff. Grants received as of 9/1/94 include:

USC Students as Literacy Tutors – USDE – $33,957 – 8/91 to 8/93

Pre-freshman Enrichment Program – USDE – $40,661 – 5/92 to 5/94

District No. 60 Library Records on DYNIX Database – USDE – $28,364 – 7/92 to 6/94

Center for the Advancement of Teaching Science, Mathematics and Technology – Adolph Coors Foundation – 2-year total: $120,00 – 8/92 to 7/94

Student Mentor Corps Program – USDE – $34,903 – 9/93 to 8/94

Co-Step Pilot Program to Establish Six State Teacher Development Centers for Biological Science Curriculum Study – NSF/BSCS – $52,500 – 9/92 to 5/95

PSAS – David & Lucile Packard Foundation – $2,500 – 7/94 to 6/95

Senior to Sophomore – CCHE – $50,000 – 7/94 to 6/95

Summer Leadership Institute – Packard Foundation – $12,500 – 7/94 to 6/95

Pueblo Project – Science Teacher Training – NSF – $402,139 – 3/92 to 8/95

Drop-out Prevention – USDE – Approx. 3 year total: $1,071,804 – 9/92 to 8/95

Eisenhower Student Leadership Training Program – USDE – $277,491 – 1/94 to 12/95

Colorado Statewide Systemic Initiative – (CONNECT) – NSF – $375,000 – 9/93 to 8/98

21st Century Mathematical Challenges – USDE – 3-year total: $180,000 – 2/93 to 1/96

Partnerships for Standards-Based Professional Development of K-12 Educators – AAHE – Approx. 3-year total: $232,065 – 10/94 to 9/97

Academic-Vocational Integration: Building a grade 8-16 continuum (PICP) – USDE – Approx. 4 year total: $1,268,000 – 3/94 to 2/98

Community Compact: Systemic Change Partnership – Pew Charitable Trusts – Approx. 6-8 year total, up to $1,239,625 – 9/93 to 8/2001

Grand Total as of 9/1/94: $5,421,509

Linkages

1) Curriculum Articulation in the Sciences
2) USC Student Mentor Project
3) High School Senior to College Sophomore Program
4) Southern Colorado Leadership Institute
5) Community Volunteers in the Classroom
6) Student and Faculty Participation in USC Research
7) Pueblo Educational Exchange
8) Library Resource Sharing
9) Music Technology
10) Center for Teaching and Learning
11) Reading/Language Arts to Chapter 1
12) Telecommunications Technology
13) Pueblo Classics
14) Business Services
15) Adventure Education
16) Visiting Artists Program
17) Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences (charter school)

Under development:

18) Nursing in the Schools
19) Gifted and Talented Students
20) Faculty Senate/Individual School Communications

Center for Teaching and Learning

Purpose:

- Prepare teachers of quality and distinction;
- Provide staff development activities for university and district faculty;
- Engage in research and curriculum development;
- Strengthen education for USC students aspiring to teaching careers; and
- Share human resources to improve educational effectiveness in university/district academic programs.

Faculty:

- USC teacher education faculty;
- District No. 60 teachers; and
- USC discipline-based faculty.

Contractual Partnerships

- Joint executive director of Facilities Management and selected Physical Plant services
- Joint Safety and Environmental Health operation
- Combined Print Shop services
- Joint Purchasing operation
- Joint Communications Services operations
- The Pueblo School for Arts & Sciences: Operated by the university under a contract with the district.
- K-12 instruction in the arts (dance, theater, music, visual arts, and creative writing), foreign language, language arts, mathematics, natural science, social science and fitness for life.

Hundreds of people–faculty, administrators, staff, parents, students, business leaders, board members, other citizens of our community and state, as well as nationally prominent educators–have sculpted the evolution of the Educational Alliance of Pueblo as the unique, new partnership stands today.

They have implemented programs and served on committees for curriculum development, site-based decision making, accountability, strategic planning, grants development, and other projects. Both the district and the university benefit from the increased interaction and cooperation between faculty and staff at both institutions.

But most importantly, students at both institutions now have more opportunities to learn, to achieve, and to succeed.

In the near future, the shape of the alliance could change considerably, depending upon what works or what doesn't.

Innovative ideas always are welcome.

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Two Roads Converged: Articulation Between a Liberal Arts University and a Technical College

Richard J. Mucowski
Rich D. Niece
John J. McGrath
Elaine A. Pontillo

Introduction

Four-year bachelor degree liberal arts universities and two-year associate's degree technical colleges have not, historically, been known to form strong partnerships. Philosophical and pedagogical perspectives are vastly different. That paradigm was changed recently at Walsh University and Stark Technical College.

Walsh and Stark Tech, located within a few miles of one another in Northeastern Ohio, have shared a collaborative, mutually supportive, and positive relationship for several years. The relationship, however, was formalized even more when both institutions entered into an agreement (see Table 1) that would help students from the technical college transfer credits to the liberal arts university. Both institutions were interested in assisting students who had completed their associate's degree and were now interested in pursuing at the baccalaureate level.

Principles that Enhance Articulation Agreements

First, both institutions must share values that support mutual ties. They must clearly assert that students and their academic needs are the prime focus in the transfer process. Campuses not honoring this basic principle may find that students are forced to adjust their specific interest in a major to one that is more convenient for the institution. In such situations, the burden for a successful transfer falls on the student. The institution becomes a mystery play to the transferring student: a play in which the principals include the students' transcript, a faculty advisor, and a stingy transfer credit determiner (dean or registrar). Oftentimes, neither the technical college nor the university sees the value of helping a student achieve broader educational goals. However, when each institution works to create bridges of student support through academic program articulation, all parties are winners.

Second, students realize they need skills in order to obtain employment. They may not realize, however, that skills in and of themselves do not necessarily ensure an individual's ability to think critically and to be versatile in handling the demands of a complex, changing world. Articulation agreements bond skills and critical thinking. They help to prepare graduates who are well versed in skill-based curricula as well as the broader issues related to communication, problem solving, and the development of reasoning abilities associated with the liberal arts.

Third, institutions promoting a philosophy of educational resource conservation, versus a survival of the fittest mentality, are poised to share limited resources and to help students through the mutual matriculation process. Such a philosophical posture in both articulating institutions leads to the strengthening of programs and good faith dealing with tax payers' money.

Fourth, program quality and vitality are realized when an institution's resources are focused rather than diluted. The articulation process allows both institutions to better utilize student, institutional, and community resources. In a sense, all parties involved enjoy the benefits of the collaborative environment with virtually no down-side.

A fifth principle involves an economy of scale achieved when both institutions focus on savings for students, potential employers, and taxpayers. Efficient utilization of professors, buildings, labs, computers, libraries, and associated technologies benefits everyone. Many businesses that have undergone the process of re-engineering and rightsizing expect that schools will benefit from a similar process. Articulating institutions clearly communicate that limited resources are being used efficiently and students are served more effectively.

Finally, students who cannot achieve their complete educational goals on one campus have the advantage of shared services with another campus. Students desiring the educational experience of a private liberal arts university, but lacking the resources to support the total four-year program, may blend the more affordable two-year technical college program with that of the higher-tuition private institution. Although it is conceivable that a mega-university might, under the same institution roof, meet most of the students' educational needs, it may not, because of sheer size, be able to meet personal and emotional needs. With majors and specializations tailored through articulation agreements, institutions can allow for more personalized academic program planning and enhanced success in academic degree completion.

Steps to be Taken to Enhance Articulation

Articulation agreements are the result of efforts that begin with a desire to help students. Critical to the success of an articulation agreement is a willingness from each institution to cooperate and to keep the students' best interest in mind. Admissions personnel from both institutions must be knowledgeable about programs and services available to students at each institution.

The role of the faculty is critical. Both sets of faculty need to approve course curriculum, rotation, and comparability of courses within the articulated majors. Once the faculty of both institutions have agreed on course and program content, prerequisites, and requirements, the dean or registrar can determine and assess general education courses required for bachelor's degree completion. The registrars of both institutions are also responsible for the logistics of transferring credits. Academic deans approve the nuts and bolts of the agreement, assuring both institutions that quality is preserved, unique character and autonomy respected, and articulation agreement conditions are regularly monitored.

The Presidents of both articulating institutions, in addition to stealing the limelight for the publicity generated in advertising such programs, gain the support of their overseers: trustees and taxpayers. Trustees who exercise their fiduciary responsibilities are frequently interested in enrollment enhancement and cost reduction while, at the same time, improving program quality. Taxpayers, who indirectly enjoy the benefits of better resource allocation, can see academic program strengthening and expansion at minimum costs.

Selecting Programs for the Articulation

Associate's degree students in business showed the initial interest in continuing on to the bachelor's level. Therefore, faculty members from business majors in accounting, finance, management, and marketing began the process of a per course/per major review. Matching associate's degree courses with upper-division classes, offered within the business department at the university, was an important and time-consuming task. Eventually, general education requirements were also identified within the liberal arts core, and a number of basic core courses taken at the associate's degree level were approved for transfer credit.

The technical college and the university began with a "boiler plate" articulation agreement for majors in the business sequence. This same approach, however, can be developed for any number of associate's to bachelor's degree programs: education, nursing, health computer technology, and science-related majors.

Promoting the Awareness of Articulation Agreements

Students accepted into the program receive concurrent letters of acceptance from the admissions directors at the technical college and the university. The letters establish student eligibility to matriculate in the baccalaureate degree program upon successful completion of the associate's degree requirements. Brochures explaining the articulation agreement, and the process by which students can establish eligibility, are available at the technical college. Counselors at local high schools, through the services of regional guidance and counseling associations, are given information to promote the process. Likewise, the counseling/advisement staff at the technical college and the admissions staff at the university have developed regular contact points to promote ease of credit and program transfer. Other key elements in the articulation process course work in the core and major area of study, and the delegation of responsibility in regard to program assessment and revision.

Announcing the Agreement

To ensure that as many interested students as possible are aware of the articulation agreement, most institutions hold a press conference. Stories written to highlight the agreement and to target qualifying participants can be circulated in local newspapers and magazines and displayed on bulletin boards throughout the area.

Conclusions from the Process

An articulation agreement has a number of immediate blessings. The articulation agreement creates institutional alliances within and between schools. It establishes that partnerships can work for the benefit of students, each institution, and the broader community.

The agreement promotes healthy resource utilization at a time when dollars for higher education are scarce. It raises the confidence of business leaders and alerts them to the fact that their support of higher education is recognized and respected. Articulation agreements reject a "business as usual" attitude and say that there is another way to help students reach their educational goals. Rather than over expanding and adding to costs, institutions can, through these agreements, create a more fluid approach to serving students and meeting their needs without increasing overhead.

Finally, articulation agreements lead to the sharing of other positive resources, such as co-sponsorship of extracurricular activities, exchange of professors, library and technology interactions, and the utilization of administrative functions otherwise too expensive for one institution to manage by itself.

Richard J. Mucowski is President of Walsh University, North Canton, OH.

Rick D. Niece is Provost, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Walsh University, North Canton, OH.

John J. McGrath is President of Stark Technical College, Canton, OH.

Elaine A. Pontillo is Vice President for Instruction, Stark Technical College, Canton, OH.

Table 1

Affiliation Agreement Between
Stark Technical College
and Walsh College

This agreement establishes a Cooperative Degree Articulation between Stark Technical College and Walsh University. Students selected for matriculation in this program may upon completion of the prescribed sequence of courses leading to an Associate Degree in Accounting, Finance, Management and/or Marketing from Stark Technical College, continue their studies at Walsh University. Students will have the assurance that they may complete all requirements for a corresponding Baccalaureate Degree within no more than four semesters of regular full-time study.

Students who have attended Stark Technical College and who have successfully completed all courses toward the specific Associate Degree will receive full transfer credit into Walsh University. Students must meet current admissions requirements at Walsh University in order to be included in this agreement.

Candidates selected for the program will receive, concurrently, a letter of admission from the Director of Admissions at Stark Technical College and a letter from the Director of Admissions at Walsh University. The letters will establish student eligibility to matriculate in the corresponding Baccalaureate Degree program upon completion of degree requirements at Stark Technical College.

THIS AGREEMENT between Stark Technical College and Walsh University is to become effective through this written document signed by both parties on September 14, 1993. Each institution will complete an annual evaluation of the joint affiliation. Either party may cancel the agreement with thirty (30) days written notice.

President, Walsh University	Date	President, Stark Technical College	Date
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	Date	Vice President for Instruction	Date

Learning Connections: Celebrating Educational Cooperatives

Fred Stahl

Overview

Learning Connections is a consortium of four public educational institutions serving the northern portion of urban Maricopa County, Arizona. Arizona State University-West Campus, Northern Arizona University, Paradise Valley Community College, and the Paradise Valley Unified School District are working together in a unique collaborative to expand educational opportunities in this region. The primary service areas of the various institutions in the consortium include all or portions of the cities of Carefree, Cave Creek, Glendale, Paradise Valley, Phoenix, and Scottsdale, Arizona. The level of educational services offered among the four institutions ranges from pre-school enrichment programs to doctoral studies and includes a wide range of academic, occupational, and non-credit, avocational offerings. Although the institutions are differentiated by the varying geographic boundaries of their identified service areas and the specific levels of their educational missions, they share a unifying foundational concept—maximizing learning opportunities for their constituents. Maximizing learning is the central mission of Learning Connections; this construct undergirds every activity of the consortium.

Learning Connections is designed to be proactive in the face of the technological, sociological, organizational, and individual human changes that are shaping the complex society in which we live.

The advent of computer information systems, fiber optics, and satellite communications is radically changing information access. In an era when prototypes for voice operated computers are being tested, when book companies are exploring placing textbooks and reference works on CD-ROM, and when "Video dial tone" will transform millions of family rooms and offices into personalized, family learning stations with immediate access to college lectures, cultural programs, feature films, sophisticated data bases, and collaborative conferences using phone and/or cable lines, educational institutions at every level must develop systems for harnessing the potential of these media.

Sociological and demographic changes are shaping an ever more diffuse and volatile environment in which educational institutions must function. The fragmentation inherent in the demise of the "traditional family," the rise in illegitimate births and births to teenage mothers, the transience of a culture in which 25% of all families move every year, the "cocoonism" induced by such representative phenomena as the average adolescent viewing television an average of six hours a day, and a prevailing distrust of the efficacy of many traditional institutions present formidable challenges to the educational institutions of the 90's.

Additionally, changes in organizational structure and values demand that educational institutions review and restructure current practices. The contemporary focus on accountability, the movement from competition to collaborations, and the increasing vitality of small, entrepreneurial, "familially structured businesses" are significant factors with which educational institutions must cope.

Finally, an understanding of the dominant generational value systems and the conflicts inherent in the needs, desires, and potentialities of the "lost generation," the boomer generation" and "generation X" call for educational institutions to structure appropriate strategies for communication and resolution of intergenerational issues.

If educational institutions are to respond to these multiple challenges, the large monolithic structures of the past thirty years must be broken into smaller systems where purposeful learning is blended with caring interpersonal relationships. Reasonable, meaningful standards of accountability must be established. Finally, educational institutions must expend a higher proportion of available economic and human resources in the development of collaborative educational and social enterprises.

Many schools are already beginning the process of restructuring themselves. In part schools are responding to legislative mandates, outcome driven strategies, and performance assessment as alternatives to maintaining a "status quo" based upon traditional textbooks and standardized testing. An emphasis on learning communities, teacher collaboratives, site based decision making in contrast to centralized decision making, and cooperative modalities over competitive modalities is beginning to emerge. Schools are making concerted efforts to become technology rich. Integrated curricula are replacing separate subjects; manipulatives are replacing repetitious drills; flexible, heterogeneous groups are replacing the homogeneous norms of the past decades.

Paralleling these organizational efforts are increased emphases on such individual human issues as stress management, conflict resolution, and dealing with diversity.

Like their colleagues throughout the United States, the leaders of Learning Connections have embraced the fact that educational institutions must change. They have found that the most difficult component in the change process is not change itself, but letting go of the past. Perhaps most important of all, the members of the consortium have learned that while change is required, the pain often associated with it is optional.

History, Structure, and Overview of Objectives

Learning Connections began in 1992. In fall of that year, Raul Cardenas was assigned to the presidency of Paradise Valley Community College. Just three months earlier, Jim Jurs assumed the superintendency of the Paradise Valley Unified School District. Both men had extensive backgrounds in their respective educational arenas; both shared a philosophy based upon a deep commitment to serving the needs of their respective student bodies and to expanding their institutions' capabilities to effectively and efficiently respond to the needs of the service areas. In addition, both men were committed to breaking down artificial barriers for individuals and to creating a seamless web of educational opportunity that would extend from pre-school enrichment programs to graduate levels of study and research.

During the same time period, David Schwalm was appointed as the vice-provost for academic affairs at Arizona State University-West campus. As a university program head, Schwalm had earlier worked extensively in a cooperative educational relationships with members of President Cardenas' staff; he also shared the vision of creative, interactive relationships that would lower barriers and enhance opportunities for student learning.

The presence of these three visionary leaders set the stage for dialogue, the formation of a Learning Connections Steering Committee and the ultimate creation and activity of the consortium.

Another important occurrence was the negotiation of an agreement between Paradise Valley Community College and Northern Arizona University, in fall 1992. The university created an extension office on the campus of Paradise Valley Community College to offer advisement and establish a program of upper division and graduate courses designed to serve the residents of the northern portion of Maricopa County. Northern Arizona University became the fourth member of the proposed consortium.

A steering committee consisting of executives, senior managers, and representative faculty and staff from each of the four major institutions initiated planning meetings in spring 1993.

Over the next twelve months the group established a state of mission and four key directions. The Learning Connections consortium committed itself to maximizing learning for all the residents of the North Valley.

Steering Committee members identified four key directions for the consortium—communications, at risk students, work force development, and systemic change.

- A top priority was the development of an information network among the institutions in order to maximize resources.
- Given a broad number of students throughout the area deemed to be "at risk," members agreed that efforts to enhance the opportunities of this important student group must be undertaken as soon as possible.
- All agreed that the institutions needed to work together in a joint effort to provide training and educational opportunities which would allow residents to meet emerging work force needs.
- Finally, the group committed itself to the concepts of change and continuous improvement in order to maximize the effectiveness of its mission.

As the next step in activating Learning Connections, the steering team identified key faculty and staff members and brought together 60 key educational leaders and planners from the involved institutions for a planning workshop. This larger group reviewed and refined the principal thrusts of the consortium and jointly determined that it should address eight key areas. Working teams with membership from each institution were identified in the areas of mathematics reform, tech-prep education, library/media, fine arts, cultural diversity, physical education and health, facilities sharing, and staff development.

The principal focus of the next series of meetings was planning and development of master plans and schedules of activities for each of the eight teams. The teams evolved at various rates; each team structured operational procedures and goals which fit the needs and the mutually determined goals of the group. The key similarity among all of the groups has been enhanced communication and collaboration on projects of mutual concern.

At this point in the development of the consortium, the steering committee meets on a quarterly basis. Meetings of the entire task force occur twice a year. Each area team meets according to the wishes of the group in order to accomplish the mutually determined goals for the year. For example, at the current time, the fine arts task force meets every two weeks because the team is designing a special signature program for the Paradise Valley Unified District. At the other end of the spectrum, facilities sharing meets on an "on call" basis because the group was able to standardize a series of agreements of facility usage during the first quarter of its operation. The common denominator is that each team is functioning in an effective manner to achieve the consortium's stated purpose of "maximizing educational needs."

Focus of the Presentation

In addition to a more in depth review of the processes and procedures utilized in operationalizing Learning Connection, presenters will share greater details about progress in such key areas as math reform, library/media, fine arts, and tech prep, and offer a perspective on strategies, benefits, and challenges that face such consortia.

Fred Stahl is Dean of Instruction, Paradise Valley Community College, Phoenix, AZ.

In Matters of Degree... Let Us Show You the Way

Mary Alice Stewart
Linda Stickney-Taylor

Why would a two-year community college and a four-year public university separated by 87 miles join forces? Why would such a partnership be successful? What unforseen collaborative projects would occur as a result of the successful partnership? Black Hawk College, a public two-year community college in Moline, Illinois, and Western Illinois University, a four-year public university located in Macomb, Illinois have such a partnership and have answers to the questions posed above. Let us show you the way...

This partnership started as the result of a casual discussion between deans at each campus concerning student educational needs. The Community College Dean expressed the need for the last two years of course work in elementary education for place bound students in his college district. The Dean at Western Illinois University indicated that such courses could probably be taught off-campus. This casual beginning had many setbacks, concerns arose in both college communities; but the program finally restarted with a more formal approach following a six month study by the National Higher Education Management Systems. This study recommended that a Rock Island Regional Undergraduate Center be established in the Illinois Quad-Cities; that such a center would allow Illinois Quad-Citians to earn a four-year college degree through state institutions without leaving the Quad-Cities. Thus, Western Illinois University became the only public four-year institution of higher learning in the Quad-Cities. The Center (RIRUC) is located on the Black Hawk College Campus in Moline. The purpose of the Center is to serve place-bound undergraduates with affordable, high quality educational programs and to provide other opportunities intended to extend knowledge and stimulate economic development within the region. Today, Black Hawk College and Western Illinois University offer cooperative programs that provide place-bound learners and other learners an opportunity to complete a four-year degree in Accounting, Business Management, Elementary Education, Manufacturing, Engineering Technology, and Applied Math/Computer Science. In addition, a Board of Governors Bachelor of Arts Degree Program is available for non-traditional adult students. Place-bound learners can complete all freshmen and sophomore requirements and graduate with an associate's degree from Black Hawk College, then transfer credits to Western Illinois University to complete the junior and senior years without leaving the Quad-Cities region.

Black Hawk College maintains an open door admission policy that provides access to higher education for those individuals who can benefit from its programs and courses. At the time students meet with a Black Hawk College advisor, they indicate that they are interested in transferring into one of the specific Western Illinois University program's in the Quad-Cities to ensure that they complete the appropriate course work at the freshman and sophomore level. Beginning with their junior year, they complete an application for admission to Western Illinois University and, upon completion of an associate's degree in the university parallel program, they are accepted with junior standing and will have completed all general education requirements at Western Illinois University.

Much of the success of this partnership results from the determination of both institutions to work closely together for the common good. Western Illinois University leases classroom and administrative space on the Black Hawk College Campus. The University has provided on-site personnel—faculty, advisors, a director, and support staff. The two institutions share science labs, computer labs, meeting rooms, student lounge, and cafeteria area. Procedures have been developed to address financial aid concerns. Articulation agreements have been established; cooperative advisement and referrals are in place to enable a smooth transition for students. A memorandum of understanding has been developed, agreed upon, and jointly signed. This agreement has helped the institutions to clarify their respective roles. However, the most valuable elements in the success of the program are the commitment to and mutual understanding of the meaning of partnerships and constant communication between the two institutions!

Unforeseen collaborative projects that have enriched the colleges and the community have resulted from joint grant writing opportunities. Seven grants that were funded generated over $552,000. The results of the funded grants, however, are even more important than the dollar amount. One grant supports the "Hispanic Program for Educational Advancement." This initiative has resulted in a Hispanic student enrollment increase at Western Illinois University of more than 30 percent and an increase in enrollment at Black Hawk College of more than 32 percent over a four-year period. The retention and graduation rates of these students increase each year. Regional distance learning and delivery systems are being cooperatively developed and implemented through joint funding efforts. Additionally, such cooperative efforts have brought about other significant results.

In summary, a tradition of excellence in service to education of place-bound students has been initiated and sustained over the past six years in the Illinois Quad-Cities.

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Chapter XI

Partnerships with Other Organizations

Correctional Facilities Programs: Challenges and Opportunities

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Recent social and political pressures and changes in federal laws and regulations have placed special demands on higher education programs in correctional facilities. For example, the elimination of Pell Grants for inmate students will have an impact on the viability of higher education programs in prisons that rely largely on federal financial aid as a funding source. A critical problem for higher education in prisons is that public demands for protection from and punishment for violent offenders cause the flow of public monies to building more prisons at the very time when public support for correctional education is declining. Many higher education institutions, however, have recognized that most incarcerated offenders are eventually returned to society, and that education can provide the means for individual change. It is within this context that prison program challenges, opportunities for successful partnerships, and questions of program quality assurance can be considered.

Responding to Prison Program Challenges

Since its opening as an urban university in Minneapolis and St. Paul in 1972, Metropolitan State University has served students in Minnesota correctional facilities, and Metro State's earliest mission statements cited service to students in prisons as a particular student clientele. As is the case for many correctional facility programs offered by other colleges and universities, Metro State began by offering single courses in a single correctional facility. Eventually, Metro State's flexible, individualized baccalaureate degree became a vehicle for incarcerated students in a number of Minnesota State correctional facilities to earn a B.A. degree.

Correctional facility programs pose interesting challenges for higher education institutions. Perhaps the greatest challenge is to provide programs and services in ways that are consistent with the security concerns of the correctional system. Faculty selection and orientation, curriculum planning, library and learning resource delivery, and academic advising and student services require special attention and modification to comply with security requirements. To meet these concerns, Metro State established a Prison Program Office to provide a focal point and clearinghouse for all communications among correctional facilities, inmate students, and the university personnel. If other university offices or faculty receive phone calls or correspondence from inmate students, these requests are forwarded to the Prison Program Office. Students failing to follow appropriate communications procedures may jeopardize their standing with the university or the correctional facility.

Another challenge in correctional facility programs is to respond in constructive ways to the extreme mobility of this special student population. Students' sudden departures in the middle of college courses or programs may result in markedly low course or program completion rates. For academic programs offered within a single correctional facility, this student mobility can be recognized at the onset, and modifications can be made in curriculum planning and course sequencing. At Metro State, however, our student-centered approach to educational delivery plays a key role in our prison education program, and our focus tends to be on the student rather than on the course being offered. Our Prison Program Office "tracks" students when they are transferred from one correctional facility to another, and faculty can then assist students in completing courses and independent studies in their new locations. A recent Metro State graduate completed his B.A. degree after he was transferred to a facility in New York.

Partnerships in Correctional Facilities Programs: New Opportunities

Higher education programs in prisons by their very nature require partnerships with correctional facilities, and frequently other agencies are involved. Since its inception, Metro State's Prison Program has collaborated with a local technical college, several community colleges, the University of Minnesota, and a private college in offering services for correctional facility students. It has also collaborated with Insight, Incorporated since 1975, thus expanding educational opportunities for incarcerated students while at the same time receiving substantial on-site administrative support for the program.

Insight, Incorporated is a private, non-profit corporation that provides postsecondary educational and job training opportunities for residents of the Minnesota Correctional Facilities at Lino Lakes and Stillwater. Post-release support, including financial aid for education and career counseling, is available through Insight's headquarters in Minneapolis. Although in its early years Insight relied on corporate and foundation grants to meet its annual budget, the corporation is now financially self-sufficient as a result of revenue generated through its industry components in telemarketing and market research. Prospective Insight students must pass a battery of tests, and once admitted, Insight students must follow a strict discipline code and maintain a C average. Concurrently, Insight students gain valuable experience in vocational training while developing communications skills, self-discipline, and a work ethic.

Insight is governed by an eight-member board of directors representing the academic, business, and correction communities. The Insight president reports to the board of directors. Insight civilian staff members in each of the correctional institutions facilitate on-site course delivery, assist students with registrations for courses and independent studies, monitor students' academic progress, and serve as a liaison with Metro State's Prison Program Office. Students' tuition payments and textbook purchases are handled through Insight's headquarters in Minneapolis. A major factor in the Insight-Metro State partnership is a shared mission of service to incarcerated students and an appreciation of linking the liberal arts and career education.

Some Factors to Consider in Reviewing Programs in Correctional Facilities

Higher education institutions and consultant-evaluators should consider several factors in evaluating the quality, effectiveness, and long-term viability of correctional facility programs. Among the questions that could be asked are:

- How central to the academic institution's mission and goals is service to correctional facility students? When partnerships are involved, how central is *higher* education to the purposes of each partner?
- Has the institution effectively organized its human, financial, and physical resources to deliver services to this special student population? Have security issues been addressed? Are orientation and training programs in place for new faculty and staff? Are the learning resources adequate? When partnerships are involved, are lines of responsibility clear to provide services to students?
- Has the institution considered questions of defining "program effectiveness" within the context of prison education? If partnerships are involved, are the views of "effectiveness" shared?
- What are the institution's long-range plans regarding prison education? Have the implications of changes in funding sources and in public opinion been considered?

- How can prison education programs be best evaluated in light of NCA's Criterion Five? When partnerships are involved, have accreditation issues and concerns been thoroughly discussed with partner organizations that are not regionally accredited?

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A New Community College Center with Five Partners: A Model for the Future?

Carroll Bennett
Allen Heryford
Kim Linduska

The concept of "partnering" is being embraced by public and private organizations as resources become increasingly scarce. The new Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) Newton Polytechnic Center illustrates how five different and unique public and private organizations cooperated to create a new entity that marshals these resources. The five organizations: DMACC; Iowa State University (ISU); the City of Newton, Iowa; the Newton Community School District; and Maytag Corporation each made a financial and leadership commitment to the center. The resulting program has focused providing a wide variety innovative educational services for the partners.

Mission

The Newton Polytechnic Center facility is devoted to lifelong learning of individuals from the region and its enterprises focusing on development of personal/social skills, technical expertise, and business excellence in the context of continuous improvement in an international environment. Polytechnic means a "multifaceted joint public/private venture" and "denotes skills in many arts," with programs focusing on business, technology, and applied science.

The mission of the DMACC Newton Polytechnic Facility is unique, when compared to DMACC's four other campuses and similar two-year institutions throughout the United States. This uniqueness stems from (1) the model of cooperation and partnering between a community college (DMACC), a major university (Iowa State University), a Fortune 500 corporation (Maytag) and a city government (Newton, Iowa); (2) the cooperative planning of programs and activities that respond to the needs of the various partners; and (3) a willingness to experiment with creative approaches to programming, especially related to business and industry.

Partnerships are successful to the extent they meet the individual needs of each party more successfully than the party could meet its own needs. In creating this partnership each partner identified specific needs that could be addressed through the collaborative arrangement.

The Facility

The Center is located on an eight acre tract adjacent to the offices of the Maytag Corporation in Newton, Iowa, a city of 15,000 located 30 miles east of Des Moines. The modern, 100,000 square foot facility is housed in a converted factory building and contains traditional college classrooms, an interactive communication center (Iowa Communications Network), computer labs, and the DMACC/Marriott Conference Center. A portion of the building is leased to the Maytag Corporation for its training center. The center was conceived, constructed, and occupied in 14 months.

The process of transforming a former defense plant into an innovative, state-of-the-art center illustrates the creative vision of the five partners. In fact, *Buildings* magazine identified the project as one of five winners in a national building modernization competition.

Programs and Services

The Center provides a window of access — (1) to students, citizens, workers, institutions, and businesses who will come to the facility for direct participation; and (2) a window to the services, information, and technology that is available at DMACC and ISU and throughout the world. The Center is truly an educational mall where people come to "shop" for diverse educational "products." The campus "delivers" programs and services for a broad spectrum of "customers." The product is delivered in differing formats and time frames using varying providers. Product quality is assured by a liberal refund policy and constant evaluation.

These functions are provided at the Center.

- **College Credit.** A comprehensive schedule of college credit classes is offered, (day, evening, and Saturday). Courses are offered in all the traditional liberal arts disciplines (English, Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, Humanities) and in Business, Computer Applications, and technologies (Manufacturing, Management).
- **Continuing Education.** A variety of short courses in business, industry, licensure, and personal enrichment is available. Selected apprenticeships courses are also scheduled.
- **Industry Training.** DMACC works closely with area business and industries to develop and offer specialized training that focuses on updating the skills of their employees.
- **Personal Development/Career Planning.** DMACC counselors and advisors assist students in assessing goals and developing specific educational plans. Comprehensive student financial aid planning is available.
- **ABE/GED (Adult Basic Education/General Education Development).** Classes and a testing center are at the site.
- **High School Programming**
    - The "Basics and Beyond" alternative high school is housed in the facility.
    - High school completion courses are available.
    - College credit classes are offered to high school students under the postsecondary enrollment options act.
- **Iowa State University Courses.** ISU schedules engineering extension and selected graduate courses at the center. The Iowa State Jasper County Extension Office is located on site for specific services.
- **Community Services.** The campus is available to business and community groups for a variety of programs, displays, and other events.
- **Conferences and Meetings.** The full-service DMACC/Marriott Conference Center accommodates meetings of small, medium, or large groups. The Center has a 325-seat auditorium with full audio/visual services, including Marriott food.

Operations

A planning group comprised of representatives from the business/education partners (Maytag, DMACC, and ISU) meets regularly to identify needs and schedule appropriate courses, activities, and programs. The focus is

how cooperation can take place to expand opportunities. No one party dominates, although the college serves as a facilitator, and a broker, between other partners. A unique feature of this approach is its ability to address a broad spectrum of individual and employer needs at various levels (from basic education through advanced engineering courses).

Practices/Techniques for Effective Partnering

Successful educational/industry/community partnerships require these practices and techniques:

- Listen to the needs of each of the parties.
- Structure issues into win/win situations.
- Defer financial considerations to the final stage of the discussion.
- Be honest in all statements/minimize posturing.
- Hold few meetings/make them short and productive.
- Take action, or decide not to act quickly/don't defer issues
- Share leadership on an issue basis.

Advantages of Cooperative Partnerships in Higher Education

- maximizes resource use
- fosters communication between groups that have common educational interests
- ensures a relevant program that is responsive to the needs of the community
- encourages mutual support of the initiative between the partners
- increases the likelihood of "outside" resource acquisition because of the united front presented by the partners
- develops a unique synergy among groups that commonly do not have close associations
- portrays a positive public image of cooperation by each of the partners

Developing a Partnership Model in Your Community

- Identify a common interest or goal that can serve as the basis for the partnership.
- Determine what each party can bring to the partnership (ideas, financing, access to new groups).
- Identify the "lead" partner and assign responsibility for leadership.
- Be willing to surrender some autonomy in return for greater gains.
- Develop a clear mission statement through a cooperative input process that provides input from all partners.
- Commit key ideas and operation plans to writing.
- Specify how ongoing communication will be occur.
- Encourage long-term commitments to ensure continuity.

Recommendations

These recommendations are suggested for improving education/industry linkages.

- **Be patient.** Begin cooperative planning with a single program or course and let the relationship build on its success.
- **Be responsive.** Listen to input from the partners and attempt to meet their needs.
- **Be introspective.** Work cooperatively at each stage to evaluate actions and activities—share responsibility for successes and shortcomings.
- **Be open.** Abandon the "traditional" roles that often resulted in alienation between educators and other groups. Be willing to experiment with new models.

The Future

It is difficult to predict the scope and operation of the partnership in the future. Our past experience shows we underestimated the potential and creative imaginations of the partners. Here are several projects that are currently in the planning stages.

- **Software Center.** This project involves DMACC, Maytag, and a host of other area businesses and industries in a program where the industries would provide financial support and advice to establish and maintain a structure through which DMACC can provide relevant training to employees.
- **University of Iowa Executive MBA Program.** The current Maytag, in-house, MBA courses will be expanded into a articulated, three-year course sequence that is offered on-site in Newton.
- **Industrial Training Lab**. Maytag and several other area industries will support the development of a industrial training facility in which DMACC will provide relevant training.
- **Conferences.** The construction of a new 80-room hotel adjacent to the Center will provide the opportunity for a substantial expansion of conferences in the DMACC/Marriott Conference Center.
- **Joint projects.** DMACC, Maytag, and Iowa State University are developing a work place literacy grant that will be expanded to include other manufacturers after it is piloted.

Conclusion

This unique partnership, focused around the new Newton DMACC Polytechnic Center, has stimulated business/school/city/educational relationships in the short 18 months of operation. The scope of activities continues to grow as the partnership expands its membership to include additional partners. It is viewed as an overwhelming success.

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Multi-Source, Multi-Level Articulation in the Era of Health Reform: Articulating the Health Sciences to Health Services Administration Baccalaureate Programs

Carolyn Prager
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Carla Wiggins

So far, higher education has escaped intense public scrutiny in the policy debates about the escalating costs of health care (Pew Commission, 1993; Horton and Knopp, 1994). Nonetheless, the education and reeducation of health care professionals remains an essential if somewhat neglected element in reforming the health care system. The authors of this paper believe that colleges and universities cannot afford to delay any further the debate within *and* between our institutions about changes required in health care practitioner education in an era of health care reform. It is our contention that new articulation dynamics will emerge from these programmatic changes, easing some of the persistent problems that have bedeviled inter-institutional articulation in the health sciences for the past quarter century or more.

When the Pew Health Professions Commission issued its February 1993 report entitled *Health Professions for the Future*, they aptly subtitled it *Schools In Service To The Nation*. Two- and four-year institutions already have an enormous stake in health care education and, therefore, health care delivery. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment in the health professions will account for 12 percent of total job growth between 1992 and 2003. In *Vital Signs for the Academy and the Health Professions*, Horton and Knopp point out that by 2003, health care positions will increase nationally by 42 percent. In 1991-92, degrees in the health professions accounted already for 9 percent of all degrees conferred and 16 percent of all associate's degrees. In addition, forty-one percent (79,453) of the degrees awarded in the health professions that academic year were at the associate's level, a fact of some consequence to community colleges and other two-year providers.

Associate's to baccalaureate degree health science program articulation as we knew it (or did not know it, depending on your perspective) is a phenomenon of the past. In the "good old days" (or "bad old days," depending on your perspective), those engaged in efforts to articulate two- and four-year health science programs faced the daunting task of trying to make the incompatible compatible. Despite these good faith efforts, most students in the health sciences with a two-year degree have inevitably had to acquire more credit hours to obtain a four-year degree in the same area of specialization than students who started and completed their baccalaureate at a four-year institution. This has been true especially in nursing and certain allied health fields where professional associations have prescribed more or less non-parallel education and training in two- and four-year programs designed deliberately to perpetuate and preserve the hierarchical nature of practice within medical fields and the segregated nature of practice among them.

Recent policy initiatives, however, suggest the future direction of health science education programs consistent with health delivery reform. The Pew Health Professions Commission has recommended implementation of model core curricula with more broadly based majors and minors in allied health within categories such as critical care, administration, rehabilitation, and diagnostic science. The federally funded National Health Care Skill Standards Project (NHCSS) directed by Far West Laboratory represents a "collaborative endeavor among health services, labor, and the education community to better prepare tomorrow's health care worker by developing skill standards today" (Far West Laboratory, vii) at the career-entry, technical, pre-baccalaureate levels. The NHCSS Project is in the process of defining a health care core of foundation skills for all health services falling into four clusters: therapeutic, diagnostic, information services, and environmental services.

Despite generic core emphases, most allied health education will still remain very specialized at the associate's degree level, given the increasing sophistication of medical technology. At the same time, the nature of practice itself is changing to involve more technicians and professionals in the performance of certain more basic medical care activities. The scaling down of health care to help contain costs means that more highly trained nurses will likely perform some of the services performed traditionally by physicians while allied health technicians will likely replace nurses in the performance of certain other kinds of medical work. This trend is of real consequence to two- and four-year institutions in that it suggests a vastly different conception of health care practitioner education at every level of preparation along a continuum that may start with but certainly does not end with the associate's degree.

In the emerging health care delivery environment, the job preservation and career mobility of those credentialled at levels up to and including the baccalaureate will require precisely the generalized education unavoidably absent in degree if not in kind in entry level academic work in nursing and allied health. In other words, despite greatly differentiated technical education and training at the diploma, certificate, and associate's levels, health care practitioners will seek or be required to seek less differentiated, more generalized curricula at the bachelor's level. Health care reform requires greater cross-training and generalized skills-building within the medical delivery system. At some point, probably at the baccalaureate level, nursing and allied health practitioners will have to learn to balance their specialized skills with more general ones required of those who will work within, manage, or lead multi-competency health care units or teams.

Senior institutions can help bring postsecondary education in the health sciences into congruence with the emerging and impending changes in health care by responding to the reformers' calls for allied health's migration from tertiary care settings to more primary community-based ones (see, for example, Pew, 42-43). They can do so **through multi-source, multi-level articulation formats that provide more flexible vertical and horizontal access routes for different postsecondary health science populations to more generic baccalaureate completion programs** like health services administration.

We emphasize that health service administration baccalaureate completion programs represent only one of many possibilities for senior institutions in the provision of career enhancing alternatives to heterogeneous clinical professional populations. Creating such programs, however, means overcoming articulation obstacles emanating from the parochial nature of the various health sciences, the increasingly specialized content of allied health education wedded to practice, and the multiple routes to the first allied health and nursing credentials. Our story is how a two-year public and a four-year private institution did so. Franklin University and Columbus State Community College created a baccalaureate degree completion program in health services administration. The program provides access with advanced standing to a generalized baccalaureate degree for certified or licensed allied health or nursing practitioners educated in a variety of different health technologies and postsecondary institutional settings.

Franklin University's Health Services Administration program was designed in cooperation with Columbus State Community College and other local two-year providers to accommodate two different groups of certified or licensed health care practitioners. The first consists of those with the associate's degree in allied health or nursing. The second consists of those without the degree who otherwise meet the same standards for certification or licensure within nursing or allied health. The completion program grants up to two years of college credit for previous postsecondary education and training in allied health or nursing, regardless of the source of that education. Franklin accepts the associate's degree in any allied health or nursing program *in toto* as meeting the lower division requirements for entry into the upper division completion program in health services administration. Since Franklin does not itself offer lower division health science education programs, Columbus State evaluates the credentials of those who have graduated from accredited *non-collegiate* allied health programs, awards transfer credit based on their institutional criteria, and transcripts it so that it can be accepted as lower division credit by Franklin University.

These interinstitutional articulation arrangements go well beyond the usual arrangements between two- and four-year institutions whereby the latter accepts some or all of the credits of the former from discrete programs. Both Columbus State and Franklin University help advance articulation *within* the entire postsecondary universe of health education providers as well as *between* their two different institutions. This arrangement enables advanced entry to health services administration baccalaureate education for graduates from different postsecondary formats who seek a four-year degree for career mobility but for whom a four-year degree rarely exists in their profession or for whom a four-year degree in a specialization would not be career-enhancing.

This arrangement also permits those who graduated from *accredited non-collegiate* programs with certification or licensure equivalent to those who graduated from accredited collegiate programs to enter a baccalaureate program with some degree of advanced standing by virtue of an interinstitutional process that transcripts and transfers credit for non-collegiate education. Franklin University and Columbus State Community College's unique articulation arrangements thereby enable a diverse constellation of health care practitioners to obtain those skills by easing their entry into a baccalaureate degree program in health services administration with advanced standing regardless of their field of preparation or previous educational background.

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Establishing Community Partnerships In the Delivery of Allied Health and Nursing Education

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The College of Health Professions is committed to the principle that excellence in education, practice, and research can be attained when those in educational practice settings combine their talents in a partnership with external agencies for the teaching-learning process of students. In addition, systems for delivery of high quality education can be enhanced by sharing substantive interchange of human and/or material resources for the purpose of advancing *common goals*.

Our examination of the mission and focus statement of Governors State University provided the faculty with the conceptual framework for some programs to seek and establish partnerships with external institutions.

Mission Statement

Governors State University's primary mission is teaching. It provides an affordable and accessible undergraduate and graduate education to its culturally and economically diverse life-long learners. The liberal arts and sciences are the foundation of the University's academic programs; these programs generally emphasize professional preparation.

Governors State has a strong commitment to cultural diversity in every facet of university life. The University values its multicultural community of students, faculty, and staff as they learn together throughout their lives. It addresses the needs of the traditional and nontraditional learners through the breadth of its curriculum, through flexible teaching strategies, and through advanced instructional technologies.

Governors State University, located south of Chicago, is an active partner in the economic and social development of the surrounding metropolitan regions, preparing informed and concerned citizens, and providing them a global perspective in an interdependent world.

Focus Statement

Governors State University provides graduate-level instruction leading to master's degrees and junior- and senior-level instruction leading to bachelor's degrees. The central priority of Governors State University is to make quality higher education easily accessible to groups historically underserved in higher education, including older adults, minorities, women, the differently abled, the economically disadvantaged, as well as traditional and international students. This diverse group of students comes to GSU to obtain skills and credentials for career advancement and for personal and cultural growth. Students work within a collegial setting geared toward developing their academic independence.

To respond to the needs of students, many of whom must balance their desire for further education with multiple commitments to family, job, and community, Governors State schedules many of its classes in the evenings and on weekends. To supplement its on-campus schedule, GSU offers classes at convenient off-campus and work sites. While affirming the value of traditional approaches to teaching, Governors State is at the forefront of instructional innovation by utilizing advanced communications and learning technologies such as television, computer-assisted instruction, and correspondence study. These methods of instruction provide assistance and convenience for students, permitting maximum interaction and minimum interference in the learning process.

Governors State University prepares its students for lifelong learning. The university simultaneously values liberal arts and sciences and professional studies as they contribute to students' pursuits of professional and personal growth. While teaching is the major focus of the faculty, research and artistic creativity maintain the professional abilities of GSU's faculty and the vitality of the teacher-student exchange.

The university encourages and leads the economic and social development of its region. In partnership with community colleges, the university links its teaching, research, and service activities with area businesses, governments, and service institutions, emphasizing practica and internships for students. Regional partners include among others, business, governmental agencies, local health care institutions, primary and secondary schools, criminal justice agencies, and both private and public welfare agencies.

The GSU community recognizes its role within an interdependent nation and world, focusing its learning and service on solving the problems of today and on meeting the challenges of the 21st Century.

From the literature on partnerships over the last year, benefits have been identified. Some of the benefits cited include:

- recruitment of students for future employment;
- additional credit generation without additional revenues, because instructional costs are borne by the contracting health care agency;
- a proactive relationship that utilizes the best qualities of both the health care and educational institutions.

The College of Health Professions has partnerships established with the following agencies:

- **A Model for Recruitment of Latino Bachelors Prepared Nurses in Chicago.** Latino Communities Area Health Center and Nursing are developing a model for recruitment, retention and graduation of Latino nurses to the baccalaureate completion and master's programs. There is a shortage of bilingual, bicultural nurses in Chicago who are prepared beyond the diploma and/or associate's degree levels in nursing.
- **The Addiction Training Center in Illinois.** Substance abuse is one of the primary health issues and social problems confronting our nation. Effective treatment of substance abuse, however, is impeded by the shortage of well-trained addictions treatment professionals. The Addiction Training Center in Illinois is one of only eleven centers established by a grant through the Department of Health and Human Services: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment to increase the number of new addictions treatment professionals and to enhance the competencies of existing addictions treatment professionals. The Addiction Training Center achieves these objectives by developing and delivering curricula in addictions for degree seeking students and for health and human services practitioners.

  The Training Consortium is responsible for implementing the Addiction Training Center's educational programs. The Addiction Training Center is administered by Governors State University, a state university with a history of using innovative instructional technologies to deliver education on addictions at the bachelor's and master's degree levels. In addition to Governors State University, the Training Consortium includes the following members: Illinois Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Center for Family Health, Cook County Hospital, Interventions and Treatment Alternatives for Special Clients (TASC).

- **A Day Homeless Shelter for a Clinical Site.** For several years now, the South Suburban PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) has provided shelter and supportive services for homeless persons. To date, 14 church sites provide evening shelter to about 650 homeless persons, from November to April, every calendar year. Started November 1994, a day shelter program was offered by PADS. In addition to other activities, the shelter has collaborated with various agencies to deliver health care to their homeless "guests." To date, Cook County Health Department, St. James Hospital and Dental Health Services have come to offer specific services.

To assist with the implementation of health care services of this day shelter, the Nursing program at Governors State University is providing the following:

1. Fall '94 and Winter '95 - Two (2) graduate nursing students in Nursing 810 to develop the site in the following areas:

    1.a. Develop a tool for a complete health assessment of individuals/families

    1.c. Set up the one-room clinic office

    1.b. Assist the PADS Coordinator in developing a referral form

    1.d. Define the documentation forms for patient files

2. Undergraduate students in Nurse 420 will use this site as one of the clinical sites to follow-up clients for their practicum experiences starting Winter of 1995.

3. Nurse 810 students will follow-up clients from this shelter every fall of the academic year to accomplish objectives for their practicum experiences.

Evaluation of the merit of the health services that our nursing students provide will be done each trimester so that necessary improvements or revisions can be made.

- **GSU-HLAD and University of Chicago Hospital Academy Joint Venture Program.** The Governors State University-Health Administration (GSU-HLAD) Program and the University of Chicago Hospital Academy (UCHA) jointly developed a baccalaureate degree program in health administration starting from the Fall Trimester of 1994. The GSU HLAD Program delivers courses at the University of Chicago Hospital and the UCHA recruits students from the University of Chicago Hospital. Through the University of Chicago Hospital's employee benefit programs, students receive financial aid from the hospital. Currently, there are 40 students who want to complete their baccalaureate degree in health administration (BHA). Students who completed 60 semesters of lower division work may apply for admission to the Admissions Office at Governors State University. The GSU-HLAD/UCHA program offers courses from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday.

The undergraduate major in health administration trains administrators who will be able to develop and manage health services organization and programs. The curriculum is designed to be an educational mechanism through which students obtain the understanding and skills necessary for health administration. Specifically, the major is designed to train administrators for unit or department head positions in large and complex health care institutions, such as clinics, nursing homes, insurance, medical group management, ambulatory care management, and family service agencies.

Governors State University prides itself on providing affordable access to excellent teaching to all citizens of the region with special emphasis on serving adult, minority, female, site-bound differentially able, and economically disadvantaged students.

- **Cooperative Dietetic Education.** In an effort to provide advanced dietetic education for students in clinically-based dietetic internships within the community, Governors State University is developing a program to enable dietetic interns to receive a master's degree from the College of Health Professions. This degree will combine community-based clinical training with advanced didactic training in interdisciplinary health courses including Health Administration, Addictions Studies, Social Work, Health Sciences, and Health Education. Students will participate in a research project focusing on the bridge of daily practice to research, thereby benefiting the student, the academic institution and the community training site.

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Continuing Education for the 21st Century: The Velveteen Rabbit Becomes Real

Kathy Nelson
Carol Nelson
Judy Shaw

Higher education faces increasing challenges as we move toward the 21st century. Among these challenges is the need to educate an increasingly diverse citizenry with quality programs offered in creative formats. Educators working within the field of Continuing Education have worked diligently to be at the forefront of change and may well serve as models to our institutions on how to respond to increasing demands for educational programs. During their struggles to take a leadership role in responding to these demands, Continuing Education departments have suffered from an identity crisis. The departmental roles have not been clearly defined, and budgets have not been supportive of expanding educational programming. At the same time, colleges' clients are requiring greater adaptability and flexibility in meeting individual and corporate educational needs. Effectiveness in Continuing Education programming is now being measured by the department's capacity to adapt quickly to rapidly changing consumer needs while maintaining superior quality service at affordable prices.

We might well look to a story from our childhoods to see a parallel to the changing role of community colleges' Continuing Education departments in the last decade of the 20th century. Our Continuing Education departments resemble the emergence of the Velveteen Rabbit into the "real" world in Margery William's classic tale, *The Velveteen Rabbit:*

> The Velveteen Rabbit was almost forgotten. For a long time he lived in the toy cupboard or on the nursery floor, and no one thought very much about him. He was naturally shy, and being only made of velveteen, some of the more expensive toys quite snubbed him. The mechanical toys were very superior and looked down upon every one else; they were full of modern ideas and pretended they were real. The model boat, who had lived through two seasons and lost most of his paint, caught the tone from them and never missed an opportunity of referring to his rigging in technical terms. The Rabbit could not claim to be a model of anything, for he didn't know that real rabbits existed; he thought they were all stuffed with sawdust like himself, and he understood that sawdust was quite out-of-date and should never be mentioned in modern circles. Even Timothy, the jointed wooden lion who was made by the disabled soldiers and should have had broader views, put on airs and pretended he was connected with the Government. Between them all, the poor little Rabbit was made to feel himself very insignificant and commonplace, and the only person who was kind to him was the Skin Horse.
>
> "What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"
>
> "Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's something that happens to you."
>
> "Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit.
>
> "Sometimes," said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. "When you are Real you don't mind being hurt."

> "Does it happen all at once, like being wound up," he asked, "or bit by bit?"
>
> "It doesn't happen all at once. You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't often happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

Like the Velveteen Rabbit, the once isolated, shelved Continuing Education departments across the country are emerging from toy cupboards to become the "Real" companions of colleges everywhere. They, like the Velveteen Rabbit, have reached out to others to meet the educational demands of a changing world, and others are learning to appreciate and accept their contributions to higher education.

A Changing World

Community colleges must educate our citizenry within a changing world. That world is based not on the isolationism of the past, but on global interdependency; not on the images of the "Father Knows Best" society, but on the images defined by a more pluralistic one; not on the wealth of the affluent, but on the riches of working people in a competitive economy; and not on the limited technology of punch card data processing, but on the technologically-advanced sciences of microprocessors and fiber optics. The Wingspread Group on Higher Education challenged us in their work, *An American Imperative: Higher Expectations for Higher Education* (1993), to respond to the demographic, economic, and technological changes we face. "Institutions, like organisms, must respond to changes in their environment if they are to survive."

Educational leaders within our community colleges' Continuing Education departments, although often seen as the renegades of academe, are poised to meet the challenges of a changing world, to respond to the changes in their environments. They have, for decades, been ridiculed for their creativity in meeting the needs of a broad educational community. Such creativity has not fit neatly into our traditional curricular packages or the list of services provided by our institutions. Program development through Continuing Education departments has often been suspect for its perceived lack of academic rigor, its flexibility, and its speedy creation. On the contrary, today, as we approach the last half of the 1990's, it is to the Continuing Education departments of our colleges that we should look for models of innovative program development and delivery. Continuing Education departments provide leadership in developing a new vocabulary and new skills for transforming education in a changing world.

A New Vocabulary for Transformation

Continuing Education departments have become increasingly accountable for assisting the broader community in solving local, state, and even national concerns. They are transforming, through their activities, the meaning of education in the community and becoming increasingly consumer-oriented. Throughout this transformation, a new educational vocabulary has been created. This vocabulary speaks of community, connectivity, alliance, and collaboration. This vocabulary is helping to shape the transformation of community college education by melding the needs of community organizations, businesses, governmental agencies, and individual community citizens with the needs of the more traditional community college classroom students.

The collaborative spirit is at the heart of this changing vocabulary. Michael Winer and Karen Ray (1993) describe collaboration as "a mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone. The relationship includes: a commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure; shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and the sharing of resources and rewards." Collaboration involves risk-taking, highly developed communication skills, and trust. It has been just such a collaborative spirit that has energized Vermilion Community College's Continuing Education department and has set it upon its entrepreneurial pathway to making community connections.

Community Connections

Vermilion's Continuing Education department has established collaborative education programs both within the city of Ely and at numerous outreach sites with private businesses, governmental agencies, artists in residence, the city's independent school district, labor unions, an international educational senior program, a tribal entity, and a nonprofit internationally–recognized environmental education center. Such community connections have been established in an effort to provide high quality educational programs and services to the college's constituencies without duplicating efforts and resources. Highlights of the department's educational connections include:

- **Private businesses** such as Ely–Bloomenson Hospital, Cypress Mining, Gateway North Aviation, and local canoe outfitters cooperate with Vermilion's Continuing Education department in designing programs to meet employer–identified needs specific to their businesses.
- **Government agencies** including the U.S. Forest Service, the Minnesota Department of Revenue, St. Louis County Social Services, and the City of Ely collaborate with Vermilion in the development of training sessions for their employees and clients.
- **Independent School District 696** jointly hires the college's Continuing Education staff to supply the community education needs of the district, including all of the city's programs for children, youth, and adults to meet their recreational needs. Through shared staffing and joint programming, community education has been consolidated throughout the district.
- **Artists–in–Residence series** with the USX Artists–in Residence, Depot Artists, and Northern Lakes Arts Association provides, in cooperation with the college's Continuing Education department, cultural enrichment activities and educational programs for area citizens.
- **National labor unions** including the United Steel Workers of America and their local branches (LTV Mining Company, U.S. Steel, Inland Steel) rely on cooperatively–designed program proposals to assist them in meeting employee–identified career development needs.
- **Elderhostel programs** take place within the college's Continuing Education department. So successful have these programs become that, outside Chicago's Institute of Art, Vermilion is the only other Elderhostel supersite in the upper Midwest, offering more than 20 weeks of programming each year.
- **The Bois Forte band of Chippewa** has developed a casino management program in cooperation with the college's Continuing Education department and Brainerd/Staples Technical College. Students completing this one–year certificate program are prepared to enter the college's newly designed Hospitality Management program leading to an Associate in Science degree.
- **The International Wolf Center**, a nonprofit, internationally–recognized center dedicated to public education about the ecology of the timber wolf, jointly creates credit and noncredit programs through Vermilion's Continuing Education department. Attracting students from across the country and around the world, this partnership enriches the quality of the college's environmental education focus.

As our community colleges become increasingly accountable to meet the ever–widening educational needs of our communities, it is critical that we invest additional time and financial resources in establishing community connections through our Continuing Education departments. Such connections, founded on the principles of collaboration and designed with an entrepreneurial spirit, will help to lead our colleges into the changing world of the 21st century. Without such investments, our Continuing Education departments and our very colleges themselves, will never become "Real." They will never know the joys the Velveteen Rabbit felt when he finally understood the wisdom of the Skin Horse: "Once you are Real, you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always."

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Chapter XII

Using New Technologies

The Emerging Community College: The Role of Technology in the Instructional Process

Daniel F. Petrosko
Gretchen J. Naff

Introduction

As we consider the changes in our society, there is no question but that technology has had an impact on the way we approach our work. In thinking about the use of technology, it may be of assistance to be reminded of Naisbett's comments regarding the stages of technology. "First, the new technology or innovation follows the line of least resistance; second, the technology is used to improve previous technologies (this stage can last a long time); and third, new directions or uses are discovered that grow out of the technology itself." (p. 27) Clearly, we are in the second stage of technology application.

If we think of technology in terms of developmental stages and accept that education is in the second stage, the question would be, how can technology be used to improve the educational process. The use of technology may improve the educational process in the following ways: increased access to education, increased access to information, increased connections with the world–at–large (global community), greater understanding of societies and cultures, improved technological literacy, increased student involvement in the learning process, greater match with the learning style of the "TV generation," and increased student motivation. While it is not our intent to state that technology will be the panacea for higher education, it is important that as educators we consider the possible benefits of technology to the educational process and ways in which technology may be appropriately utilized.

At the College of Lake County, a large, suburban, community college located north of Chicago, the students have diverse backgrounds with various levels of experience and association with technology. For several years, the college faculty have used technology, such as the graphic calculators in mathematics, computers for writing in English classes, interactive videodisc tutorials, computer simulations in various disciplines, computer assisted design and manufacturing, and distance education through the use of telecourses. More recently, the college faculty have become involved in telecommunications and multimedia instruction.

Telecommunications

The College of Lake County (CLC) is a member of the North Suburban Higher Education Consortium (NSHEC) which includes colleges, universities, and community colleges in Chicago's north and northwest suburbs. The participating institutions are both public and private, two–year and four–year, from specialized local institutions to major comprehensive research universities. The Consortium's continuing challenge is to plan, coordinate, and expand the availability of quality undergraduate and graduate level courses in the underserved and rapidly growing areas of Lake County and north/northwest Cook County. The Consortium is committed to developing programs for the region to meet the needs of the diverse populations.

One component of the Consortium's activities is to offer courses through a telecommunications network that includes College of Lake County, Oakton Community College, William Rainey Harper College, Northeastern

Illinois University, DePaul University, National–Louis University, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. This telecommunications network, which is partially funded by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), is an interactive compressed video network that is presently comprised of nine similarly equipped classrooms connected via a broadband (T1) telecommunications line. The classrooms contain four cameras, video codec with multipoint control units centrally located, four television monitors, and voice–activated microphones.

To determine the appropriate classes, the Consortium conducted a needs survey of residents, and the colleges reviewed program offerings to determine courses that may be attractive to other colleges. The courses selected included disciplines where the instructional expertise was not available at other colleges; programs that needed additional enrollment; and programs or courses not offered in a particular geographical area. After a thorough evaluation of need, sixteen courses were selected for broadcast to multiple sites for fall 1994.

The distance education classroom creates a whole new teaching/learning environment. Faculty who are very comfortable lecturing to students in a "live" discourse, must now be equally adept at involving students situated thirty miles away in an electronic classroom. An important instructional issue is how to include both eager and apathetic students into the virtual classroom discussion regardless of location as students must feel that they are active participants and not just passive "TV" watchers. Significantly, faculty must become acclimated to the technology itself with training being the key ingredient to system success. Faculty must be willing to experiment with technology, flexible, organized, have a sense of humor, and be prepared for the worst—the system may not work the day it is most needed.

Multimedia

To meet diverse student learning styles and to increase access to a variety of instructional resources, the college established seven multimedia–equipped classrooms in summer 1994. The purpose of these classrooms is to infuse computer and video–based educational and training tools into our curricula and to provide better presentation systems. The initial equipment included a three–gun multiscan video/data projector, VHS tape player, videodisc player, electronic switch, computer with CD–ROM player, audio amplifier and speakers.

The installation of these classrooms was only a step in the multimedia continuum at the college. Importantly, faculty preparation and training preceded the classroom investments. Three separate staff development classes were held related specifically to multimedia on both the Windows and Macintosh environments. Faculty were also granted release time and sabbaticals with the express purpose of experimenting with and creating multimedia products. In addition, a faculty multimedia development lab was created in the Learning Resource Center that included the appropriate hardware and software. These initiatives have led to a greater use of multimedia software on our campus; from Horticulture to Biology, Art, English as a Second Language, and Business Law, faculty have embraced these new technologies and are using multimedia software in the classroom.

Conclusion

The implementation of these two systems has presented a number of challenges related to training requirements, preparation time, availability of equipment for development of materials, determination of appropriate methodology for the instructional content, and copyright and intellectual property rights issues. In addition, the telecommunications classroom brings other challenges such as coordinating multiple institutions and their policies and procedures, connecting multiple classrooms, and establishing an environment so that students at distant sites feel they are active participants in the class.

There have been numerous challenges, and we continue to explore the appropriate use of technology in the instructional process. Our review of the research has not shown that these methods have a greater impact on learning; however, our experience demonstrates that this use of technology increases access to educational opportunities, meets students' expectation for access to information through the use of technology, and revitalizes faculty as they explore possible instructional options.

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Working with Faculty to Use Technology in Distance Education

Charlotte Webb Farr

The University of Wyoming has engaged in distance education for the last ten years, offering a full array of courses leading to a degree in one of several undergraduate and graduate areas. The program is conducted using multiple technologies, which range from audio teleconferencing to two-way interactive video. The program has grown nearly 30% per year for each of the ten years it has been operating. We attribute this growth to the fact that we have a sound faculty development approach to distance education.

From its inception, the program focused on adequate preparation of faculty to teach in a mediated environment. Because we believe that teaching via technology is different than teaching face-to-face (Shaeffer and Griffin, 1986), faculty development is prerequisite to our distance education program and includes three major components: recruitment and pre-course discussions with faculty, pre-semester seminars or workshops, and ongoing coaching (Shaeffer, Kipper, Farr, and Muscarella, 1990).

Recruitment and Pre-Course Discussions with Faculty

We begin by seeking faculty who have been successful in face-to-face courses and who are likely to be receptive to new ideas in teaching. Many of the faculty who teach for us have received campus teaching awards, grants for teaching innovative classes, and/or stipends for integrating new teaching techniques into their classes.

Whatever the means of selection, after an instructor has been recruited to teach a mediated course, he/she is contacted by someone from our instructional design team for a meeting. This initial meeting serves many purposes, particularly the need to discuss such salient items as the academic objectives of the course, the preferred teaching style of the instructor, and the appropriate match between these and the media available. During this meeting an informal assessment is made of the most appropriate way to proceed given the particular course, the particular instructor, and the particular objectives of the instructor. Often this decision also is influenced by the target audience. For example, if we have a number of students interested in a course who are not able to go to one of our compressed video sites, we might want to offer the course via audio teleconferencing and to augment the audio portions with pre-recorded videos. At this point it is important to ensure the instructor that the delivery system may necessitate adaptations in his/her teaching but will not result in different student performance outcomes.

The affective context of this initial meeting is extremely important. The atmosphere must be one of exploration and trust. The instructional designer must respect and value the competence of the instructor. He/she must listen carefully to understand what it is that the instructor wants to convey. Similarly, the instructor must accept the instructional designer as a peer and be receptive to new ideas and methodologies suggested by him/her. Both must approach the task as colleagues.

Pre-Semester Workshops or Seminars

Soon after the first encounter, the instructor is invited to participate in a training session with other instructors also recruited to teach that semester. The purpose of this session is to provide an overview of the technologies, to offer an opportunity for faculty to experiment with different media, and to acquaint them with the infrastructure that supports them as they prepare and deliver their courses.

Typically, these seminars take place using the specific medium (media) determined during the pre-conference interview to be the most appropriate. Every effort is made in this seminar to simulate the experience of the distant learner and thus to acquaint the instructor with the type of concerns that need to be taken into consideration in order to make the learning experience a meaningful one for his/her students. Veteran technology instructors are invited to share their experiences concerning the capabilities and limitations of distance education. High on their list of recommendations is "Be Prepared."

Despite the fact that most of the faculty recruited to teach at a distance are excellent teachers, this first meeting always includes an introduction to the teaching process as outlined by Gage and Berliner (1988). This then serves as the theoretical basis for everything that follows in the seminar. This theoretical framework will be discussed later in this article as part of the discussion on matching media, methods, and teaching objectives.

In conjunction with the seminar a packet of training materials is provided to each instructor. These packets contain a potpourri of items outlining the policies and procedures of the Office of Off-Campus Credit Courses, suggesting techniques for successful teleconferencing, detailing information about our students and their needs, stating do's and don'ts for using specific media, establishing guidelines for preparing an extended syllabus, and anything else deemed to be useful for our faculty. Some of these materials are discussed during the workshop; most are available for reference to later.

Heavy emphasis is placed on interactivity. In keeping with Moore's (1989) three categories of interaction, instructors are encouraged to interact with the content, with each other, and with the workshop leaders. Again, opportunities to experience the three types of interactivity are built into the workshop. Particularly significant to us is the opportunity to interact with one's peers. Our student evaluations reveal that peer interaction accounts for a considerable amount of the students' satisfaction with our program (Farr, 1995). Thus it is imperative that faculty learn to value this as a powerful teaching tool.

Ongoing Coaching

By far the greatest effort in faculty preparation for teaching at a distance is expended in ongoing, one-to-one coaching. From the first encounter with faculty until the final grades are turned in, faculty have access to a team of instructional designers willing to discuss teaching techniques and to do anything else to ensure their success. Our philosophy relative to using media is to let the situation dictate the appropriate medium. This individual approach is reflected in the individual treatment afforded our faculty.

We have found that faculty have many concerns both before and throughout the semester they teach via electronic delivery systems. Therefore, our instructional designers monitor the courses and maintain informal contact with each instructor in order to take care of these concerns before they become impediments.

One way to establish this informal contact is by conducting a formative evaluation somewhere in the first third of the semester. Formative evaluations assist the instructional design team and the instructor in determining how the class is progressing, if there are any technical bugs inhibiting class participation, and if the students feel the learning experience is adequate. Information gleaned from the formative evaluation enables adjustments in the teaching process to be made early enough to ensure a successful learning experience and to avoid disaster.

Formative evaluations must be conducted in a non-judgmental manner and feedback from the evaluation provided in a nonthreatening way. Usually this is not a problem. As part of the evaluation process students are asked to suggest remedies for any complaints they have with the course so far. Most often, since they are working as part of a group and trying to reach consensus, they come up with reasonable, well thought out solutions that the instructor is encouraged, but not required, to institute. Some problems are technical or logistical in nature and the instructional designer will consult with the office or the engineers to seek solutions. Some problems have no easy solution. Still, the opportunity to discuss the problem in this manner lessens the frustration felt by the students and decreases the likelihood that they will vent their frustration on the instructor. Ultimately the formative evaluation process tends to improve the students' attitude toward the class and to improve the summative evaluations later. All of which makes teaching more satisfactory for the instructor and strengthens the collegiality between the instructor and the instructional design team.

Theoretical Basis for ID in Distance Education

The individual approach apparent in the ongoing coaching of faculty reflects the theoretical basis for all distance education at the University of Wyoming. We do not use a formulaic approach to education, nor do we anticipate finding the perfect distance education package. To the contrary, we view education as an individual act involving the induction of knowledge and meaning. "Individuals, not groups, learn and they do so by questioning, analyzing, and synthesizing information, by integrating what is new with what they already know, and by restructuring or deep processing information" (Farr, 1995, p. 2). More importantly, from the perspective of providing distance education, education is a communicative act.

The instructor's role in this communicative act consists of five parts: knowing the educational objectives, being aware of the characteristics of his/her students, integrating into the teaching experience what is known about motivation and learning from psychology, utilizing methodologies appropriate given the preceding, and evaluating the results (Gage and Berliner, 1988). The instructor's role in distance education is exactly the same, except he/she must superimpose on this process a knowledge of media and how to match media with these functions.

The preeminence of communication in the educational process greatly influences the selection of media in distance education (Farr and Shaeffer, 1994). Different educational objectives require different types of communication. For example, simple rote learning may only require presentation of information accomplished by lecturing, or one-way communication, such as is available via broadcast television, pre-recorded videos, or print. On the other hand, induction of meaning necessitates dialogue, or two-way communication, such as is available only via interactive systems.

Given that each medium has within its hardware inherent capabilities with respect to the type of communication possible, understanding of the characteristics of media is critical to successfully matching objectives and methodologies at a distance. In other words, "depending upon the type of communication required, there is a congruence between different media and certain methods" (Farr and Shaeffer, 1994, p. 54).

Space does not permit elaboration of this principle; however, a model instantiating the conceptual framework for suitably matching objectives, methodologies, and media has been developed (Farr and Shaeffer, 1994). This model is the cornerstone of the instructional design program described previously. It is the essential element in successfully maintaining quality in a program involving multiple media, diverse disciplines, and an audience scattered over 98,000 square miles.

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Evaluation of Distance Learning Programs

Mary S. Hartwig
Beverly Bartels

Introduction

Since 1992, Arkansas State University has provided academic programs to distant campuses using telecommunications technology to provide individual or simultaneous hookups to four different remote sites. Our primary efforts have been in the areas of nursing education. Each distant learning site has transmitting equipment, so classes can originate from any location on the phone network. Availability of programs in rural areas encourages students to remain in the local area after graduation.

The use of a telecommunications network to provide educational opportunities for rural students is rapidly gaining acceptance by institutions of higher education. The older student demands that educational institutions consider their community and family responsibilities in planning and delivering academic programs. Although economic advantages are a leading impetus in driving this change process, the national trend of older students returning to school for advanced education is a significant factor in motivating tradition-bound institutions to re-think their approaches to adult education.

As technology has progressed from satellite to desktop, interactive video has become the next frontier in using electronic networks to bridge the distance between students and the educational facility. The capabilities of compressed video technology using T_1 lines has increased the community's demand for ready access to academic programs. Recognizing the capabilities of a compressed video network, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education has encouraged educational institutions to implement distance learning (DL) initiatives by providing equipment costs to selected institutions. Our experiences in using compressed video technology in delivering courses to distance learning sites has enabled us to identify issues essential to delivering successful academic programs.

Criteria for Use of Compressed Video Technology

Four major criteria provided the guiding principles for implementing a distance learning system:

- affordability for all students
- availability at times that students' needs
- accessibility in terms of driving distance from home and work
- effectiveness: meeting the same outcome criteria as the host campus students, at the same level

Implementation of Distance Learning Programs

Implementation of a successful distance learning program requires careful planning and an institutional commitment to provide start-up and ongoing costs. All segments of the university must re-think their approaches to delivering of services that support the academic arm of the university. Important factors to be considered in planning a distance learning program include the following:

- Courses to be delivered
- Selection of sites that will be most accessible to students
- Logistical challenges:
    - Availability of course materials at the distant site
    - Classroom security
    - Examination security
    - Faculty/staff meetings
    - Scheduling
    - Technology breakdown

Management Issues in Delivery of Distance Learning Programs

Delivering distance learning programs requires academic units to deal with many management issues that are unique to distance learning. Issues that academic units should consider in the planning stages are:

- Whether residence credit will be granted for DL courses.
- How course load for students receiving financial aid will be treated when students are taking courses at both the host and the receiver campuses.
- Arrangements for equipment acquisition and maintenance.
- Handling the legalities of using audio-visual media.
- Determination of faculty workload for distance learning courses.
- Preventing section "roll-over" when students are using telephone registration.
- Assuring timely and accurate advisement for DL students.

Evaluation of Programs and Technology

Both quantitative and qualitative data have been collected to evaluate two major factors in courses using compressed video: technology and student performance.

- **Technology.** Evaluation of technology has been performed by using an instrument developed by the Director of Distance Learning entitled, "Evaluation of Telecommunications Assisted Instruction

(TAI)." In general, DL students agree or strongly agree that "... the telecommunications-assisted instruction (TAI) equipment enhanced my ability to learn course content." Local studio students are less positive about the effect of the equipment on their learning, but are gratified to have the experience of using compressed video technology.

- **Student Performance.** Multiple statistical comparisons of examination scores and student evaluation data show that learning via compressed video technology is as effective as learning in the traditional classroom. Another external criterion measure is success on the NCLEX-RN licensure exam. Of the two classes graduated from a DL site program, both have passed with a 100 percent pass rate.

- **Ongoing Evaluation.** Arkansas State University's continuing evaluation plan will make the data more comprehensive by including the following factors:

    - Student perceptions of effect on personal and group learning and on quality of class delivery.
    - Student socialization to the professional role.
    - Faculty perceptions of ease of using technology, preparation required, effect on student learning, and classroom interaction.

Summary

Arkansas State University's experience with implementing, managing, and evaluating distance learning programs demonstrates that such programs are cost-effective, and that learning outcomes are equivalent at local an distance learning sites. The university must honor its commitment to meeting the needs of the rural adult learner even during periods of diminished economic resources. Achieving a viable distance learning program requires careful planning, adequate support staff, ongoing evaluation of technology and student outcomes, and a long-term institutional commitment grounded in the university's mission statement.

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Teaching the International Internet

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Learning the Internet is a valuable experience. Most people you teach will be overwhelmed by an initial session. The key to effective teaching is knowing how to place the class sessions and keep the enthusiasm alive.

To educate people to productively exploit the riches of the Internet while ensuring that they grasp the fundamentals, here are some observations about teaching the International Internet. These ideas are culled from the authors' experiences of teaching more than 1100 teachers and students how to navigate the Internet at several campus sites. No doubt, this list is not exhaustive, but it will assist North Central Association members who are considering taking on an Internet learning or teaching function.

- **What Complexity Level You Will Target for Internet Presentations.** By the complexity level, not only is the audience's background important, but also the depth to which you intend to take the subject matter. This judgment will certainly affect the effort you put into your class session as well as the type of session you will teach. It is one thing to teach FTP (File Transfer Protocol) to novices to help them retrieve ASCII documents. It is quite another level to explain hypertext, the role of the client/server model in network applications, or the meaning of the TCP/IP protocol vis-a-vis FTP. Someday soon, there will be a need for Internet education certification, presumably consisting of presentation skills, education skills, and Internet knowledge and experience.

- **Clearly State Your Goals And Plans For All Class Sessions.** When teaching the International Internet, you need to state clearly your goals to your class. This gives participants the opportunity to match their expectations with yours. For example, you could tell each class these two goals. First, tell the class that you plan to make them comfortable on the International Internet so they will greet the opportunity to connect to the International Internet with enthusiasm rather than anxiety. Second, you instill the attitude that makes the students self-reliant so they can answer their questions about specific tools, approaches, and etiquette by using the Net itself.

- **Outline the Class Session Objectives.** Outline the specific objectives of the class session as well as the outcomes you expect. For example, in a beginning class you might cover e-mail, FTP, telnet, BBSs, listservs, and usenet groups. When the authors first taught this class, the objective was to expose people to the main tools since many in the class were teachers. It was important for them to learn their jobs. However, as the composition of the classes changed to general users, the focus was on specific tools. Thus, instead of showing the class Mail or Mailx, Elm, and Pine, Pine was covered in-depth and introduced a section on creating a signature file. You should therefore match objectives to the composition of the class. Further, state clearly your orientation to the subject. In many cases, it is stressed that the practical use of the Internet will be by students in higher education who are seeking research results. Technical questions, such as the role of bridges and routers in networks, the function of the IETF regarding standards, or the different classes of Internet addresses are reviewed during later class periods.

- **Match Session Objectives to Student Interests.** There are several reasons for understanding the interests of students. They serve as a basis for examples and help personalize the International Internet. For example, you search in medical sites (Gopher or World-Wide Web (WWW)) for information when teaching biomedical researchers, and you search legal sites for classes with law students and paralegals.

Further, you stress that students should remain focused on specifics when searching the Internet and that information retrieval is a disciplined adventure. Knowing their interests helps the teacher illustrate Internet features at a practical level.

Also, to the extent possible, know your students' names. Learning the student names and their topical interest areas is important in making all International Internet sessions fun and worthwhile.

- **Give the Students Hands-on Experiences as Soon as Possible.** As soon as possible in your first class session, the teacher should encourage interaction. The teacher should talk for about 20 minutes about the practical nature of the International Internet as a communication channel and resource repository and then move to hands-on experiences. While repetition is key, stress to your class that the class is a team effort and class members should help each other.

  This reinforces physically what is happening virtually on the International Internet. If a student asks a question about a topic that has been covered, for example, the use of a pine mail command like (control x) to send mail, the teacher solicits help from a class member. Not only does this keep the class involved, but also it keeps students alert and keen to others as well as practice their International Internet understanding.

- **Offer an Internet Overview.** You need to offer an overview of the International Internet, if only to counter general misconceptions about what is available, how to connect, who uses it, and how much it costs. Also, some students are used to other types of information systems and become frustrated because they find the International Internet "disorganized." These barriers to learning and practical use need to be lowered, if not vaulted. After this discussion of the role of communications and resources, you can then launch into the logic of E-Mail addresses before starting the hands-on sessions.

- **Intersperse Training with Tips, Tricks, and Techniques.** Throughout your International Internet classes offer tips, tricks, and techniques to your students. A teacher's favorite is recommending that each student keep log books to record her/his navigational exploits. Students are encouraged to keep log books for two reasons. First, all systems fail, including memory, and a log book is an excellent way to lower the learning curve. Second, tell your students that if they keep their logs religiously, in one semester they will have enough material for several articles, research papers for other classes, material for speeches, and discussion material for family gatherings. Since each person brings to the International Internet a unique perspective, skills, talent, background, and understanding, he or she can use this International Internet learning experience to make a professional or personal contribution.

- **Reinforce Material throughout the Class.** The principles of public speaking often work during Internet sessions, for example, mixing information with anecdotes and personal experiences and reinforcing information repetition. Continually review the concepts of FTP, gopher, archie, Lynx and pine mail as you teach. This repetition also breaks up the intensity of the Internet sessions to make the pace of learning manageable and enjoyable.

- **Explore Fun Commands, Such as Talk.** Given the steep learning curve of the first class, try to give students a measure of self-confidence along with a fun experience. You could initiate talk or ytalk with as many as five students simultaneously. The teacher's point is that this command serves well as a conference call and allows them to see the Net in action in real-time. To the extent that humor and fun can be introduced, the teacher realizes that the learning experience is deeper.

  You also can teach the mesg command when showing the use of talk and ytalk. Another series of fun elements, based on student comments, is the sequence of commands that start with users and go through who, finger and w. In time, the teacher shows how finger can be used in principle to gather information about current users on Internet networks around the world.

- **Make Sure The Students Are Challenged.** Along with the fun of the International Internet, show the complexity of the Net and how alternatives must be considered and imagination exercised. You stress that the International Internet can be approached systematically, in a disciplined way. At the end of

Some International Internet Commands for the Students

Over time, as you teach each class period you let students practice material that they have learned in previous classes. Some Internet commands that you may have to cover during your classes are:

- ***How do I dial-in from home?***
  (701) 857-3800 to enter Minot State.
  Example: login: millhorn; password: oklahoma

- ***Electronic mail (e-mail):***
  Lets you send mail to other Internet users.
  Example: $ pine C   seymour@warp6.cs.misu.nodak.edu

- ***Newsgroups (Usenet):***
  The term "news" doesn't mean news like you'd read in a newspaper.
  Example: $ tin soc.culture.china

- ***ftp (file transfer protocol):***
  Use this feature to grab programs and files from the Internet.
  Example: $ ftp rtfm.mit.edu   anonymous   Password: E-mail Address

- ***gopher:***
  A menu-driven interface to the Internet. (Veronica is a tool used to find gopher sites)
  Examples: $ gopher chronicle.merit.edu, $gopher, $ gopher gopher.nips.ac.jp (Japan)
  Examples: $ gopher nic.funet.fi (Russia), $ gopher sylvia.lance.colostate.edu (Greece)

- ***Wais (Wide Area Information Server):***
  WAISs are databases that are searchable by keyword.
  (WAISs are usually set up by an organization to provide information on a topic)
  Example: $ telnet bbs.oit.unc.edu   login: bbs

- ***telnet:***
  A basic tool for connecting to another computer on the Internet.
  Example: telnet bbs.isca.uiowa.edu)   Name: New

- ***IRC (Internet Relay Chat):***
  A way to chat in real time with other International Internet users.

- ***WWW (World Wide Web):***
  A hypertext system for navigating the International Internet. A graphical browser called Mosaic and Lynx are other hypertext systems being used on the net.

several class sessions, which you consider the equivalent of learning the alphabet and the numbers from one to ten, you show how the student can take a company such as Microsoft and develop a systematic approach to search for it with different tools. For example, using who is with Microsoft, you identify the Microsoft area. Then using who is again and again, you eventually reach an administrative or technical contact. Further, you try to draw from students the likely name of the FTP site for Microsoft as ftp.Microsoft.com. Finally, you have your students try it out to see if, indeed, they can connect. Not only can they connect, but also the resources they find are rewards in themselves.

> This example reinforces a teacher's approach of making the course practical, and the tools that are taught provide the basis for retrieving materials students can use in their everyday lives. You should also suggest alternatives. For example, show a host with no client and tell the students that they must use telnet to bbs.oit.unc.edu to get there. But before doing that, you ask a student to parse the address to reinforce the naming conventions of top level domains, subdomains, and hosts. The bottom line here is that some students will push to reach a higher level, and you should be prepared to coach them, for example, explaining how you can edit your bookmark pages, whether in Gopher or Lynx.

When teaching the International Internet, you will also include having your students complete an evaluation form, let the students know you are available for follow-up, keep in touch with the students, and as a teacher work hard to keep your International Internet skills on the cutting edge.

Summary

Teaching the International Internet is fun for students and teachers alike. The hard part of any new technology related teaching unit is to get started. The Internet is for every academic discipline. So get your Internet address from your computer center and start teaching it this semester. Perhaps using E-mail and gopher are the best place to start. This session will give you an overview of Teaching The International Internet and the session handout will be your future guide to success. Once you have used the International Internet, you have committed to using electronic means of finding and retrieving information in a variety of forms: text, graphics, sounds, and even animations and movies. Your future information needs will be found on "The Net." This includes everyone doing business with the North Central Association. Your communication and research area will be the "world."

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